THE
# SATURDAY EVENING POST
FOUNDED, A.D. 1821
THE GREAT PIONEER FAMILY PAPER OF AMERICA.

Vol. 77. FIVE CENTS A COPY. Philadelphia, Saturday, August 21, 1897. $2.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE. No. 8.

### THREE VOICES.

BY B. B.

I heard a voice, whose music still
I hear, sing thus: "Oh, time! oh, tides
Ye are too weak our love to kill;
For time may go, but love abides."

Another sang: "Oh, time! oh, lands!
Oh, life and death with ceaseless flow!
Though sad we hold our empty hands,
As love may come or love may go."

The last: "I know that love is great;
Under his sceptre gods must fall,
But this I know: that soon or late,
Time is still stronger than them all."

## WON AT LAST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A TERRIBLE PENALTY," "HIS DEAREST SIN," "MISS FORRISTER'S LAND STEWARD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVII (Continued).

He was not a bad waltzer by any means; but, either he had not got Decima's step, or the emotion, which was pressing on him, made him unsteady and confused him, for, before they had gone the round of the room he had lost the time, and presently came to a full stop.

"It is—is hot, isn't it?" he said, looking just below her eyes, "and the room is crowded,"—it was not—"Wouldn't you like to sit down for a little while?"

"Oh, yes," said Decima, promptly. She would not have very much enjoyed a waltz with Mr. Mershon, even if their step had matched perfectly; and she was glad to be released. He led her through the great glass door at the end of the room, into the palm house, and they sat under a marble nymph. The light from the lamp in the hand of the statue fell upon Decima's face, and Mr. Mershon glanced at her in silence for a minute or two. He had paid several visits to the buffet, but he was not in the least intoxicated; and the wine had only served to give him a kind of spurious, desperate courage.

Decima leaned back and fanned herself. She was scarcely conscious of his presence, but was listening to the waltz, and thinking of—Lord Gaunt. The tone of his voice haunted her, and she wondered what made him so sad and grim in the midst of the general gaiety.

Then, suddenly, Mr. Mershon broke in upon her reverie.

"Rather a fine place, Leafmore," he said. His voice, sharp and thin, yet not quite so sharp and metallic as usual, jarred upon her.

"Yes," she said, simply.

He stroked his clean-shaven lips and looked about him through half-closed eyes, critically, and then glanced at her covertly.

"I shouldn't mind having a place like this," he said, meditatively.

"You have a very"—she could not say "beautiful"—"grand house already, Mr. Mershon."

He shook his head.

"Yes; but it's rather commonplace, you see. I should like an old house, something after this style. I think I shall buy one—there are always plenty in the market. Why do you smile?" he added, quickly.

Decima laughed softly.

"Because you said that as others say it when they are referring to quite a trivial, inexpensive thing," she replied, candidly.

"Well, it wouldn't break me," he said, coolly. "I might just as well spend my money that way as not. The only thing is—it would be rather large for—for a bachelor."

"Lord Gaunt is a bachelor," she remarked.

His face darkened for an instant, then he smiled, and nodded towards the ballroom. She looked, and saw Lord Gaunt with Lady Blanche Ferndale upon his arm. He was looking down at her as he talked, with a smile on his face, and the girl's eyes were upturned to his friend, Mr. Mershon—is bringing it

"He won't remain a bachelor very long," said Mr. Mershon. "They say that the Ferndales' daughter will be mistress of Leafmore—"

Decima looked at Lord Gaunt and Lady Blanche with a sudden contraction of the brows.

"She is very beautiful—very!" she said, under her breath.

Mr. Mershon nodded.

"Yes; but I didn't ask you to come here to talk about them," he said, with a kind of desperate abruptness. "I don't take an interest in them or—any one else but myself and—and another person."

Decima turned her eyes upon him with faint surprise.

"What a strange speech!" she said, with a smile. "I don't in the least know what you mean!"

"You don't?" he said, incredulously, and with a side glance at her. "Don't you know that the only person I take any interest in is—you?"

Decima neither blushed nor started, and the smile was still on her lips as she said:

"In me! That is very kind of you, Mr. Mershon. I suppose it is because you are so great a friend—you see so much of—my father."

He looked at her and lowered his eyes quickly. Gaunt would not have doubted her innocence and sincerity for a moment, but this man was of different metal.

"Not altogether," he said. "Yes, I'm a friend of your father's—a true friend; but— but, if I am, it's because of you."

Decima looked at him with a slightly puzzled air, and he went on, not hurriedly, but slowly, as if he had rehearsed his words:

"I've known you some—some weeks now, Miss Decima"—she frowned, unconsciously, at the "Decima"—"and it's only natural that I should have grown to care for you—to love you, in fact."

Now, let it be remembered that no man had ever spoken of love to her; that she had, unlike most girls, never thought or dwelt upon the great mystery. She scarcely knew what it meant; but she knew enough to shrink at the sound of the word in Mr. Mershon's voice. The color left her face and her lips grew very grave.

"That's how it is with me," he went on, after a pause. "I've fallen in love with you, and I want you to be my wife."

The very suddenness of the thing lessened the shock, strange as this may sound. If she had been at all prepared, had suspected what was in his mind, there would have been time for the repulsion—almost horror—to have stirred within her. As it was, she sat half stunned and bewildered. Her silence did not daunt him. Mr. Mershon was accustomed to getting what he wanted, sometimes by guile, sometimes by force, sometimes by sheer, dogged persistence. He meant getting this lovely girl—anyway.

"I want you to be my wife," he repeated. "I suppose you have seen this coming—"

Decima found her voice at last.

"No; oh, no, no!" she said, like one speaking mechanically.

And it was well for his coolness that he did not see the shiver which followed her denial.

"Well, that's because you are so young and—and innocent," he said. "But I thought you might have guessed. I daresay your father does."

"My father!"

The cry was almost one of amazement.

He nodded.

"Yes; he must have seen it; and I don't suppose he'd have any objection. Why should he? Look here, Miss Decima; I'm not going to boast—I know I'm not worthy of you; I don't know any man that is—but—well; as I say, I hate anything like boasting—but I can't help feeling that I've got the means to make you happy."

The horror was beginning to grow upon her, to make itself felt. She tried to rise, but she seemed under a spell; and there was something hideously fascinating in his cool, measured voice and tone.

"I'm a rich man. It wasn't swagger when I said that I could buy a place like this." He looked around. "I'd buy a couple—half a dozen—if you expressed a wish to have them. I'm rich enough. But that's all I want to say about that. What I meant to say is, that all my money won't bring me happiness unless I can win you. I'm as deeply in love with you as a man could be—"

"Oh, stop, stop!" she said.

Her voice was broken, and faltered in her eagerness to stop him, to be saved one single word more. "I—I did not know. Indeed, indeed, I did not know! I never thought, never guessed! Oh, do—do believe me! You must believe me—"

"I do," he said.

"Well, then," she said, drawing a long breath, "you will not say any more—will not even think of it again?"

He looked at her fixedly.

"Does that mean that you refuse me?" he asked, in a low voice.

She turned her lovely eyes with frank amazement at his not understanding her.

"Oh, yes, yes!" she said, eagerly, as a girl speaks when she does not wish to wound. "I could not—could not!" She laughed a quavering laugh. "Why, I—I have never thought— I am so young—I— Oh! why did you tell me?"

There was pain in the voice—the pain of innocence at the approach of knowledge.

"You're not too young to be married," he said. "And, as to your never having thought; well, I can understand that. You didn't know. But you know now, and I'll give you time to answer it."

"No, don't—please don't!" she implored, with girlish eagerness. "I could not think. I—I am sure! All the thinking in the world would not make me—I could not!"

Every word she spoke every emotion pictured on the lovely face—only made his desire more intense, his determination more solid.

"Do you hate me?" he asked, shortly.

Decima shrank.

"Hate! Oh, no, no! Why should I?"

"Do you dislike me?"

She moved uneasily.

"Why should I dislike you? My father—you have been kind— Oh! why do you ask me?"

"If you don't hate or even dislike me, you can grow to like me," he said, doggedly, with the persistence which had helped him to make his money. "I'm in no hurry. I don't want to hurry you. I'll give you time to think it over—"

"No," she said; and suddenly her voice had become full of womanly dignity. "I do not want any time—I am quite sure."

"But you can't be," he said. "I've taken you by surprise. You said so. You don't know your own mind. Take time. Don't answer me now. Tell your father—" He glanced at her, and something in his words and his glance—was it a presentiment?—made Decima shudder. "Tell him, and—er—ask him to advise you. It's a serious thing, matrimony. All your life depends upon it. It's like a big coup in mining shares; you rise or fall forever. Take time, only don't forget that I love you, and that I'd do anything to make you happy." He looked towards the ballroom. "None of those swells could say more than that, and they couldn't mean it more. I love you, and I'd spend every penny I've got to make you happy."

Decima was pale to the lips by this time; but there was no longer any tremor on them, nor was there any faltering in her eyes, dark enough now to be called black.

"I am sorry!" she said, in a low, clear voice. "I must—I must—say 'No!' A thousand times, 'No!' Will you—will you please find my father, and tell him I would like to go home, Mr. Mershon?"

Something in her voice, the touch of queenly dignity in it, daunted him for a moment. He rose and stood before her, looking not at her face, but at the edge of her dress.

"I'll find him. But—but—I don't accept your answer—it's not my way. When I want a thing I hold on till—till I get it. And I want you, Miss Decima, very badly!"

She looked up at him with a kind of surprised horror and repulsion. His face was pale, and his thin lips compressed tightly. The man looked—well, like a man who meant what he said. If she had had the least liking for him, she would have felt some admiration for his dogged tenacity; but his determination repelled her.

"Oh—go, please!" she said; and he went.

He wandered about the rooms until he found Mr. Deane in the hall. He was talking to Lord Ferndale and one or two other men, talking in a high, strained voice, and emphasizing his words with his thin, lean hands. Mr. Mershon caught one sentence—

"The electric storage. My invention, Lord Ferndale. Mr. Mershon—my out. There is a fortune—an enormous fortune—"

Mershon turned away with an oath and a sneer.

"I've got her fast enough," he muttered; and he did not deliver Decima's message.

Decima sat quite still after he had left her. No attempt shall be made to analyze or describe her state of mind. What pen could do it? The first words of love had been spoken by Mr. Mershon, let that suffice.

Her brows were drawn straight; she sat like one in a dream. And thus Gaunt found her. She did not hear his step until he was close upon her, then she seemed to awake, and turned to him with an eagerness which made the blood rush to his heart.

"This is our dance," he said, simply. "Your partners—those whom you have deserted—are rending their hair. I am prepared to be rent also."

She rose without a word, and he led her to the ball-room.

They began to dance. For a moment the room, the lights, the flashing diamonds, whirled like the prisms in a kaleidoscope, and her feet were uncertain; then, as his strong arms held her, the feeling passed. Gaunt waltzed, as he did most other things he attempted, perfectly. She felt as if she were treading on air—as if she were supported by something as supple and strong as steel. A delicious sense of rest, peace, stole over her. She looked, once, up at his face, and met his eyes. They smiled down at her, and the smile sank into her heart. She laughed softly, why she knew not. His arm tightened round her, and she could feel his breath upon her hair.

Suddenly the room began to swim, the music grew to a roar in her ears, and the lights seemed to have been extinguished, as if a hand had passed over them. He felt her sink on to his breast—felt the collapse; and, with all a strong man's self-possession, he carried her, apparently still dancing, towards the palm house.

When they had reached it, he looked down at her. She had fainted.

He lifted her in his arms, and bore her to a corner, surrounded by giant ferns. It was almost dark there, and the only sound near to them was the rush of a fountain.

He held her in his arms, and looked down at her—all his soul in his eyes. Her head was lying on his breast, her lips, parted, touched the front of his shirt.

The man's great love overmastered him.

"Decima!" he whispered. "My darling, my darling!" At that moment, so selfish is the best, and the worst, of men, he almost wished her dead. "My darling, my love!"

He bent his head until his lips touched hers. His own lips were hot with the fever of passion, and, as if their fire had warmed her back to life, she shuddered, and opened her eyes.

For a moment there was no intelligence in them, then she saw and recognized him. A shiver ran through her, and, all unconsciously, her arms tightened round him.

"I am so glad!" she murmured, unconsciously.

"So glad—dearest?" he whispered.

"Yes," she said, faintly. "I have been asleep and dreaming, and—and I thought it was someone else. Have I fainted, Lord Gaunt?"

"Yes," he said, hoarsely, as he allowed her, and helped her, to stand upright. Her arm was still round his neck, and she drew it away without a blush, with perfect innocence.

"I am so sorry!" she said.

He was white to the lips, and his dark eyes glowed like coals.

"Decima!" he panted. She looked at him with a faintly troubled smile. Then she frowned.

"He called me that!" she murmured, half-unconsciously. And she shivered.

"It! Who?" he demanded.

She looked up at him and swept the soft brown hair from her forehead.

"It—it does not matter! Oh, let me go home!" she said.

He stood, still holding her, his eyes like spots of flame. So might the king of the forest he had so often hunted have looked when brought to bay.

With a great, a terrible effort he controlled himself.

"Stay here!" he said, hoarsely. "I will find your father."

## CHAPTER XVIII

Gaunt went in search of Mr. Deane. He found him, not in the ball-room, but wandering about the hall, examining the bric-a-brac, as absorbed and preoccupied as if there were not a hundred persons dancing, and a band playing within hearing.

"Decima, Miss Deane wants you," said Gaunt, hoarsely, and he took his arm and led him to the fernery.

Decima looked up with a smile. She was pale, but there was no fear nor shyness in her eyes, and Gaunt saw that she had not heard the passionate words which had escaped him when she was coming to.

"Stay here," he said, "and I will get the carriage for you." He spoke abruptly, almost sternly. He could scarcely trust his voice. He went through the fernery and to the stable yard, and ordered a brougham to be brought round to the side door immediately; and then he went and found her wrap and returned to them. She was going to stand up for him to put her wrap round her, but he pressed her lightly on the shoulder.

"Do not rise," he said; "rest until the carriage comes. It will be here directly. Miss Deane should remain in bed to-morrow," he said to her father. "The heat and the excitement have been too much for her, and she is not strong."

Mr. Deane gazed at her absently. "Decima is like her mother," he said; "she had a weak heart—yes, she is very like her mother."

A sharp pang went through Gaunt. Decima laughed a little tremulously.

"I am quite strong," she said. "And I don't believe there is anything the matter with my heart. I don't know why I fainted; but, oh, I am so ashamed of giving you so much trouble! Please, please, go back to the ball-room; they will be missing you!"

"Let them miss me," he said, curtly. He sat down beside her, his hands thrust in his pockets, his head drooping. His face was drawn, and there were deep lines upon it, the effort at self-restraint was almost too much for him. Presently he heard the carriage drive up to the outer door of the conservatory.

"Come," he said.

Decima rose and was surprised to find that she felt weak and giddy. He took her hand and drew it within his arm, and almost supported her, it may be said that he almost lifted her into the brougham. Then he drew the wrap closer around her. She leaned forward and gave him both her hands with a little girlish gesture of gratitude.

"You are always so kind to me," she said.

He held her hands and looked into her eyes, shining like stars from her pale face. He could not have spoken to save his life, and she did not see his face, or its pallor and rigidity would have startled and frightened her. At last he found his voice.

"Good night," he said. "And good-bye."

The tone of his voice did startle her.

"Are you afraid that I am ill?" she said. "I am not; I am not! You will see to-morrow that I am all right."

"To-morrow!" His lips formed the word almost inaudibly, with an accent of despair. His hands closed tightly on hers for a moment, then he laid them down gently on her lap, said "good-bye" again, hoarsely, and closed the door. As the brougham drove away she bent forward and looked back at him, and he forced a smile to his white face. He stood for a moment or two looking out into the night, as a man looks when hope is slowly leaving him forever, then he went back to the ball-room.

The dance was going brilliantly. He went about from one to the other, apparently quite at his ease, and sharing the delight and pleasure of his guests. He did not dance again, but he talked, and even laughed, and to the end was a most perfect and charming host.

But to him how long the end was in coming!

At last the last carriage had driven away, and he stood alone in the silent hall. He looked round him with a confused air, as if he were bewildered, then he went to the fernery and sat in the seat in which he had sat, and with his head in his hands faced the situation. His strength, his resolution had broken down, and he knew it. He had spoken words of love to her, though he had sworn to himself that he would never do so. It had so happened that she had not heard them, but temptation would assail him again, and he would not be able to resist it. The time would come when, yielding to the passion which had consumed him, he would speak as he had spoken to-night—and she would hear. Therefore, it was impossible that he should remain near her any longer.

There was only one thing for him to do—to go away, to fly from temptation. He rose with a groan, passed through the ball-room, where the servants were putting out the lights and went upstairs to his own room. Hobson was waiting for him, and glanced with concern and alarm at his master's haggard face.

Gaunt dropped into a chair. He felt well-nigh exhausted by the terrible strain that he had undergone.

"Get me something to drink, Hobson," he said.

Hobson hurried down and brought a brandy and soda. Gaunt drank it straight away and got a cigar. As Hobson held the match he saw that his master's hand was shaking.

"You are tired, my lord," he said. "Will you let me undress you?"

"Not just yet," said Gaunt. "Yes, I'm tired. This—this place doesn't suit me, I'm afraid, Hobson. I'll clear out to-morrow—the first thing."

"Very good, my lord. Where do we go?" said Hobson.

Gaunt sighed wearily. "I don't know. I'll decide to-morrow. I'll get you to pack up to-night. I go alone."

Hobson colored. "Hadn't I better go with you, my lord?" he said, in a dry voice.

Gaunt looked up at him with just a glance of gratitude. "No; I must be alone, Hobson," he said. "You had better stay here and look after things. I'll send for you if I want you."

The man sighed and said nothing; he knew it would be useless, and he went into the next room and began to pack.

Gaunt drew his chair to the writing table and wrote a note to Bright, saying that he was going away, and telling Bright to let everything go on—the improvements in the village, and all the plans which he and Decima had decided for the welfare of the people, as if he, Lord Gaunt, were still at home, and he held the pen in his hand and asked himself if he should write a word of farewell to Decima. But he could not trust himself. He could not write a commonplace note. If he wrote he felt that some word of his love and despair would creep into the lines. He flung the pen away from him and put the paper aside. He had said "good-bye," the last good-bye. He must never see her any more.

He did not go to bed, but sat in his chair for the few remaining hours before the sunrise, then he had a bath, changed his clothes, and, long before the village was astir was on his way to catch the mail that would carry him up North, and hundreds of miles away from Decima—and temptation.

They were still at breakfast at the Woodbines when Mr. Bright was shown in. He looked anxious and upset, and held an open letter in his hand.

"I beg your pardon for bursting in upon you, Miss Deane," he said, with agitation, as Decima gave him her hand, "but I'm in great trouble."

"Why, what is the matter?" she asked, and her eyes rested on him with ready sympathy. "I hope it is not serious! Sit down and tell me."

Mr. Bright dropped into a chair, but rose again almost instantly, as if he could not keep still, and began to pace the room.

"It's Lord Gaunt!" he said. "He has gone!"

The color rose to Decima's face—it had been pale a moment before, and its pallor increased as the flush faded.

"Gone!" she echoed, in a low voice. "When? Where?"

"This morning, quite early. By the mail! Where, I don't know! No one knows; not even Hobson! He brought me this note. I'll read it to you!" He read it.

Decima leaned back, her hands folded in her lap, her eyes downcast.

"He has thought of everything!" she said. "Why are you so troubled?"

Mr. Bright heaved a deep sigh. "Yes, that's all right enough," he said. "He has told me that everything is to go on as usual, and I ought to be satisfied; but I'm thinking of him just at this moment, and I don't seem to care about the improvements and the rest of it. I'm anxious about him, Miss Deane. I'm afraid he's in trouble!"

"Trouble!" said Decima, in a low voice.

"Yes! Hobson tells me—he would not say much—it's not his way, but he was off his guard for a moment—and he told me that Lord Gaunt was very strange last night. Hobson had only seen his master as bad once or twice before in his life. The man is devoted to Lord Gaunt, and he is greatly distressed and very anxious about him. He thinks he must have heard some bad news; yet he cannot understand how Lord Gaunt can have done so. Anyway, he has gone, and we may not see him again for years!"

Decima rose and went to the window. A weight seemed suddenly to have fallen upon her heart. The sun was shining on the little garden, but yet it looked dark and cold.

"He may come back soon!" she said.

"He may," said Mr. Bright, with a sigh, "but Hobson does not think it likely. Why, the hall is to be closed, and only a few servants retained! I shouldn't be surprised to find that Lord Gaunt had gone to Africa, after all."

Decima drew a long breath. "I hope he will be happy wherever he has gone," she said. She tried to keep her voice steady and to smile, but the voice shook, and her eyes grew suddenly dim.

Mr. Bright was too absorbed in his own grief to notice the effect upon her of his tidings.

"Well, I thought I'd come and tell you," he said. "Of course you will go on helping me, Miss Deane. You won't desert me, as—as Lord Gaunt has done?"

"He has not deserted you," she said. "He has left you word to go on doing all the good and noble things he began. We—you—have no right to expect him to stay here, if he does not wish to. Why should he not go away?"

Bright sighed and reached for his hat. "It's like you to speak like that; and you're right. He's his own master; but I feel anxious and worried about it. You see, I'm fond of him. Of course I can't expect you to share my feelings. I'll go back to the Hall and see about closing it up. This will be a blow to the county and the neighborhood. And after such a splendid success as last night, too! Well, well! Good morning!" He got his hat and sighed himself out of the room.

Decima stood by the window and looked straight before her. All the brightness seemed to have gone out of her life. She remembered that he had said "Good-bye" last night. Remembered the tone of his voice. It was significant enough now. It was evident that he had resolved last night to leave Leafmore. Why had he done so? What had happened? Had he learned bad news, or was he tired of the place, and of all his friends?

No answer was forthcoming. She went back to the table, but she could eat no more. She wandered about the house as if she were in a dream; and later on she put on her outdoor things and went down the village. The people were full of Lord Gaunt's departure, and she had to stand and listen to Mrs. Topper's lamentations, echoed shrilly by Mrs. Murphy. A cloud seemed to have fallen on the place and darkened all its brightness.

Decima went her charitable rounds with a dull aching at her heart. At the Leafmore gates she stopped for a moment and looked down the avenue. Some men were taking down the fairy lamps, which had been stretched from tree to tree; some grooms were exercising the horses; the men were talking amongst themselves, and she caught a few words. They were talking of Lord Gaunt's departure, and the loss it would mean to them.

She returned slowly and heavily to the Woodbines. As she passed through the hall the door leading to the laboratory was ajar, and she heard her father and Mr. Mershon talking.

She had not forgotten his proposal; it had oppressed her at the first moment of her waking, but Lord Gaunt's flight, for it was little else, had for a time driven all thoughts of Mr. Mershon from her mind; but now the scene with him in the conservatory rose before her, and she drew back with a little catch in her breath. Suddenly she heard her father utter an exclamation of dismay and a groan. She pushed open the door and entered.

Her father was pacing up and down, his hands gripped tightly behind him, his head bent, his hair in wild disorder. Mr. Mershon was, as usual, seated on the bench; there was a big cigar in his mouth, also as usual, and he was regarding Mr. Deane with a half cynical, half curious expression.

Decima went straight to her father. "Did you call, father? Did you want me?"

Mr. Deane stopped in his pacing to and fro, and regarded her with a vacant, troubled stare; then he pushed his hands through his hair and stifled a groan.

"No, no; I didn't call!" he said. "I'm engaged on business with Mr. Mershon. Go away, Decima."

Decima turned to Mershon. "What is this business?" she asked—almost demanded. "What is troubling my father so?"

Mershon extinguished his cigar by jabbing it on the bench, and kept his small eyes fixed on the operation.

"I thought you knew," he said. "It's this Electric Storage Company."

"I do not know," said Decima. "What about it? Tell me."

Mershon glanced at her a moment. "It's the invention of your father's," he said. "An awfully clever thing! There ought to be a lot of money in it; and I thought there was. You see I don't understand this kind of thing myself, and I relied upon Mr. Deane. He ought to know!"

"If I do not know, who does?" exclaimed Mr. Deane, throwing out his hands with pitiful vanity.

"Just so," said Mershon slowly, and shooting another glance at Decima. "If

he doesn't know, who does? That's what I told them in the city."

"What is the matter?" asked Decima. "Has anything gone wrong?"

"Well, yes; I'm afraid there has," he said. "The thing, the invention, doesn't seem quite to work out somehow."

"It does—it must!" broke in Mr. Deane, wildly. "I will explain!"

"I'm afraid it isn't much use explaining to me," said Mershon. "As I said, I don't understand anything about the invention—the machine. All I understood was to float the company; and I should have done that right enough if it hadn't been for this hitch."

"Is it some mistake?" said Decima. "Can it not be put right?" She turned from Mr. Mershon to her father anxiously.

"I hope so; upon my soul I hope so," replied Mershon. "I've sunk a lot of money in the affair. But that's nothing," he went on quickly; "it won't break me if I lose it—every penny of it; but I'm afraid your father's gone in for it rather heavily."

Mr. Deane groaned.

"I—I have invested a great deal," he said.

It is very probable that he did not know how much, seeing that he had left the matter entirely to Mr. Mershon.

Decima was too young, too ignorant of the world to understand clearly and fully, but a sense of coming evil oppressed her. She laid her hand upon her father's arm.

"Perhaps it will all come right, father," she said.

"Of course it will!" responded the inventor, with a kind of desperate courage. "I can't be wrong! It is the great idea of my life! It only wants explanation."

He grabbed at some drawings, and unfolded them with a trembling hand. Mr. Mershon regarded them sideways with cynical dubiosity.

"Better explain them to the shareholders," he said. "I can't make head or tail of them." He reached for his hat, and looked at Decima as he smoothed it. "I should like a word with you, Miss Decima," he said, under his breath, and with a jerk of his head towards the door.

Leaving her father poring over the drawings, Decima followed Mr. Mershon out.

"I'm afraid your father's deeper in this thing than I thought," he said, looking at a rose-bush with his stick, and glancing up at her sideways. "I cautioned him not to go into it too heavily, but he seems so certain of the success of the thing that I shouldn't be surprised if he'd sunk a greater portion of his fortune in it."

Decima regarded him with troubled eyes.

"And—and you think he will lose it?" she asked, in a low voice.

"I shouldn't wonder," he answered. "That's the worst of these inventions; there's generally a screw loose somewhere."

"What shall I do?" said Decima to herself.

Mershon picked a leaf off the rose-bush, examined it critically, and glanced up at her in his covert way.

"I'm afraid your father's a bit worried about your brother, Miss Decima, isn't he?" he said.

Decima stared at him.

"My brother?" she said.

"Yes," replied Mershon, picking the leaf to pieces with his long nails. "Seems to have been going the pace. Been writing to your father for more money again."

"Bobby!" exclaimed Decima. "I—I don't understand!"

"Oh, it's a way young fellows have when they get up to London," said Mershon. "I daresay it isn't serious, and he'll pull through. Good morning."

Decima did not return the adieu, and Mershon came back and glanced at her again.

"So Lord Gaunt's off!" he said. "Thought he'd cut the place all of a sudden, like this. Gone to Africa, I hear."

The red flooded Decima's face for an instant, then left it pale again.

Mershon stood with his eyes fixed on the ground.

"You haven't forgotten what I said to you last night, Miss Decima?" he said. "Whatever happens, I stand by what I said—every word of it. Good morning."

He held out his hand, and Decima just touched it with her fingers; then she went back to her father.

"Tell me what all this means, father?" she asked.

Mr. Deane launched into a torrent of words to prove that his invention was impregnable; but it is needless to say that they carried no conviction to Decima's mind.

"And what is this about Bobby, father?" she asked, anxiously.

Mr. Deane paced up and down, and tore at his hair.

"I don't know! I don't understand!" he said, impatiently. "Your brother Robert keeps writing for money, and says that he has incurred debts which must be discharged at once. I have sent him all the money I can. Yesterday I had a letter from my banker saying that I had overdrawn my account. Mr. Mershon has been kind enough to lend me a hundred pounds——"

"Mr. Mershon!" said Decima, faintly.

"Yes, yes!" responded Mr. Deane. "He is extremely kind. I don't know what I should do without him——"

Decima stole out of the laboratory, feeling faint and sick.

## CHAPTER XIX.

That night she wrote to Bobby. There was not a word of reproach in the loving letter; she only begged him to come home, if only for a day. Not until five days afterwards did she receive a hurried scrawl from Bobby, saying it was impossible for him to leave London just then, but that he would run down as soon as he possibly could. The letter was so unlike him—there was not a touch of Bobby's brightness in it—that it filled Decima with dismay and foreboding.

The days passed. It seemed to her as if there were forty-eight hours in each of them instead of twenty-four; she felt so lonely, and as if something had gone out of her life. She grew pale and listless.

When she went for a walk she avoided the gates of the Leafmore Lodge; and if she were compelled to pass them, she would not glance up the avenue.

She tried to forget Lord Gaunt, not as one who has loved and lost, for she did not know that she loved him, would have been startled if the idea had entered her head for a moment; but she felt that, yielding to Mr. Bright's entreaties, she had done her insignificanj best to keep Lord Gaunt amongst his people—and had failed.

But it was hard to forget a man whose name she was constantly hearing. The village people were always talking of him and deploring his absence. The county families were indignant at his sudden flight, and the local paper shed an inky tear over it.

Lady Ferndale, the Countess of Roborough, and several of their friends had called upon Decima, and would have welcomed her into their set; but Decima felt as if, like Lord Gaunt, she hated society. She shrank into her shell, as it were, and the great ladies after a while gave up the attempt to woo her from it.

The only persons she saw were Mr. Mershon and Mrs. Sherborne. He came to the Woodbines nearly every day, and Mrs. Sherborne very often accompanied him, and sat with Decima in the drawing-room while her brother talked to Mr. Deane in the laboratory.

Mrs. Sherborne was as constrained as ever, and she watched Decima with a covert scrutiny which sometimes got on the girl's nerves, and made her feel as if she must scream or rush from the room. She was beginning to feel as if a net were being drawn around her.

And yet she could not complain of Mr. Mershon. He was too clever to harass her with attentions, and his manner towards her was one of the deepest respect and deference.

Sometimes Mrs. Sherborne brought a magnificent bunch of orchids from the Firs, and only sometimes she casually mentioned that Theodore had cut the blooms with his own hands.

Now and again Decima met Mr. Bright; indeed, he sought her as of old, and asked her advice and assistance in carrying out the benevolent schemes which he always declared she had started; and Decima tried to throw her heart into the work which she had begun so eagerly; but she seemed to have no heart to throw. Now and again she asked Mr. Bright if he had heard from or of Lord Gaunt, but he always replied in the negative, with a shake of the head and a sigh.

One afternoon she came back from the village feeling tired and listless. She took off her things, and then went down to a little room at the back of the house, where she kept her pets.

It had grown into quite a small menagerie; for, in addition to the guinea-pigs and white mice she had brought with her, there were other pets which Lord Gaunt had given her. There were some Belgian hares, a rakish-looking jackdaw, who was quite a linguist in his way; a tame hawk, and a couple of Norwegian rats, to say nothing of a tortoise, and a case of green lizards.

Gaunt had given her these from time to time, bringing them up in his pocket, and stealing a secret joy in her girlish delight at receiving them.

As Decima fed and played with her pets, she remembered the happy minutes she had spent with Lord Gaunt in the room; how he had told her the history of each of the animals, and had been coaxed by her into narrating some of his hunting stories. She could almost see him as he leant against the wall, smoking his cigarette, and smiling down at her as she knelt beside one of the cages. He had never been anything else but kind to her ever since the first day she had met him. Now he was gone, and she should, perhaps, never see him again!

She sighed as she took the jackdaw on her hand and stroked his black plumes, and the bird croaked as if in sympathy.

Suddenly the door opened, and, looking round, she saw Bobby. She sprang to her feet with a glad cry, and flung her arms round Bobby's neck, the jackdaw flying with a shriek to the ceiling. Then, as she looked into his face, she drew back with a little cry of alarm and apprehension.

Was this Bobby, the bright, laughing-eyed boy, whose every word was a jest—this pale young man, with gaunt cheeks and black marks under his eyes!

"Bobby!" she exclaimed. "What is the matter—are you ill?"

The flush rose to his haggard face for a moment, and he averted the eyes which had hitherto met hers so straightly.

"I am rather seedy, Decie," he said. "It's—it's the London life."

He sat down on one of the cages, and she sat close beside him, and got hold of one of his hands and pressed and dragged at it anxiously.

"Why didn't you tell me you were coming?" she said. "And, oh, Bobby, you must be ill to look like that!"

"I didn't know until this morning that I was coming," he said, ignoring her comment on his appearance. "You're not looking first-rate yourself, Decie," he added; for the sudden flush of excitement had left her face, and its pallor was perceptible.

"I am all right, Bobby," she said. "But tell me; is anything the matter?"

He looked down at the ground and began to roll up a cigarette; and she could see that his hands were shaking.

"There is something the matter, Decie," he said. "You've got to know sooner or later; it can't be kept from you, and you'd better hear it from me than any one else—we're in trouble, Decie!"

Trouble! Her lips formed the word; then her woman's courage came to her aid—

"Tell me all—everything, Bobby!" she said. "Whatever it is, we must bear it and meet it!"

He lit his cigarette, but it went out again, and he flung it from him with a nervous gesture.

"It was Mr. Mershon wired for me," he said.

"Mr. Mershon! Why should he telegraph to you?"

"Because he thought I ought to know—that I ought to be here. He was quite right, of course. He met me at the station, and told me all about it."

"All about it! About what? Is it—is it anything to do with this business—this company—of father's?"

Bobby nodded gloomily.

"Yes," he said; "that's it. The affair has come to smash!"

Decima drew a long breath.

"To utter smash!" he said. "I don't understand it all, even now, though Mershon tried to explain. There was something wrong in the invention—the patent wouldn't hold water—I don't quite know what it was. Mershon tried not to put the blame on the governor, but he let it out reluctantly."

Decima sat pale and silent for a moment; then she murmured—

"Why did he join Mr. Mershon?"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## Bric-a-Brac.

Glass Bangles: Both Hindoo and Mussulman women wear glass bangles, and in the Northwest Provinces they are regarded as sacred objects. If a glass bangle be accidentally broken, its pieces must be gathered together and kissed three times. Every Hindoo woman wears these ornaments until her husband dies, when she breaks them with a brick or a stone, and substitutes gold or silver ones, the sign in the north of India that the wearer is a widow. Thus it is that the demand for glass bangles is never-failing.

Cremation: Among the ancient Greeks both cremation of the dead and burial in the earth were practiced, though it is uncertain which was the more common. The ashes of the dead were sacredly preserved in urns. Among the Jews burial prevailed, as it has since among Christian nations.

Roman Baths: Every Roman in early days had the use of the public baths on payment of about half a farthing. These were not such structures as we call public baths, but superb buildings lined with Egyptian granite and Nubian marble. Warm water was poured into the capacious basins through wide mouths of bright and massive silver. The most magnificent baths were those of Caracalla, which had seats of marble for more than sixteen hundred people, and those of Diocletian, which had seats for three thousand people.

Smoke Letters: Japanese jugglers are deft smokers. Several of them will sit before a curtain, and, with the tobacco smoke which issues from their mouths, will form a succession of readable letters.

Crape on Doors: The custom of placing crape on the door of a house where there has been a recent death had its origin in the ancient English heraldic customs, and dates as far back at least as the year 1100 A. D. At that period hatchments or armorial ensigns were placed in front of houses when the nobility and gentry died. The hatchments were of diamond shape, and contained the family arms quartered and colored with sable.

Egg-Cooking: In the cooking of eggs the custom of ancient shepherds in the far East was to place a raw one in a sling, which was then whirled round and round until the heat produced by the rapid motion cooked the egg within.

Curious Custom: A lady lately returned from Brazil tells of a curious custom in Para. She went with her uncle, who was on business, to dine at the house of a wealthy merchant. Everything was very gorgeous and lavish in South American style, but, on leaving, she was amazed to hear her hospitable host say to her, "If you have any washing, send it here." It is a custom there, it seems, for wealthy households to take in laundry work as an employment for their large retinue of servants. "It did, however," said the relater, "give me a turn at the end of a formal dinner party to be asked for my soiled linen."

Hand-Shaking: Chinese settlers on the Island of Sumatra have a strange and ludicrous form of salutation. When they meet each other—say, after an absence of a month or longer—they do not shake each other's hand; they smile broadly, and each grasps his own hand, shaking it vigorously for a few moments.

Of Old in Egypt: The early Egyptians deemed it a duty to provide wine for the comfort of their dead. This was not, however, offered in a liquid form. The wine berry was the usual medium in which wine was provided, while barley was provided to secure the deceased his modicum of beer.

Poisoning: Poisoning is very prevalent in Thibet. If any one offers a man tea, he generally refuses it unless some one first drinks some in his presence.

—The difference between color-blind people and others is simply that, owing probably to some diversity of tint in the constituent portions of the eye, the rays of light by which colors are recognized reach the retina in different individuals in a different condition.

The citizens of Dijon, France, recently voted a sum of money for pulling a railing round a tree standing within the city limits. The tree bears a label which informs the sightseer that it is the oldest poplar in France. The Town Council has a record tracing the history of the tree since the year 722 A. D. It is 122 feet in height and 45 feet in circumference at the base.

## A LULLABY.

BY G. K. M.

Shadows of night are a-falling
Robin is ceasing to sing,
Going to bed, tucking his head
Under his cozy warm wing.
Dustman is coming to baby,
Baby is falling asleep—
Hushaby, pet! baby, don't fret!
Sleepery, peepery, peep.

There will be dreams for my darling.
Visions of beautiful things,
Dreams of delight, seraphs in white
Soaring on silvery wings.
They will come visit my baby
Soon as he's fallen asleep—
Hushaby, pet! baby, don't fret!
Sleepery, peepery, peep.

# THRO' EVIL PATHS

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SISTER OR WIFE?" "THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE," "UNDER SUSPICION," "HER DEAREST FRIEND," ETC.

### CHAPTER VI.

While so standing, I heard the Doctor say, in his sharpest tone:

"Where is Miss Meredith?"

"Surely," remarked Mrs. Beverley, softly, "for Margaret's sake, we need not draw her at present into what is, so far, purely a family matter."

"Madame," replied Doctor Fairfax, sternly, "you did not hesitate to inform Sir Duncan Drew of this affair, although, so far as you were aware, he was clearly outside the family circle. It is for Miss Beverley to decide whether her friend shall be present or not."

"I will call her," volunteered Margaret.

With that she came out of the room and met me, and we re-entered it together.

"Well," Doctor Fairfax proceeded to explain, "Marthe is found; and, being found, she has a most extraordinary story to tell. I shall repeat it as I have heard it from her, without fear of hurting anybody's feelings, because a deal of it sounds like sheer nonsense, the result of a warped imagination. Marthe says that she hid from Margaret behind a tree, and, just as she was about to call out to be sought for, a hand from behind was clapped over her mouth, something was passed over her eyes, and she felt herself lifted and being carried away without being able to make a sound. She says that at first she thought it was her sister playing a trick on her, or she would have struggled more.

"Then, she adds, a voice whispered in her ear, 'I have you—it is I, Margaret. I will not hurt you if you remain quiet.' After that there was a sweet faint smell close to her nostrils, and for a time she remembered nothing more. She must have gone to sleep, for she had a peculiar dream, which she describes with the utmost minuteness, and without any variation. She says that she saw herself lying on a couch, but feeling too drowsy to move. The place she was in reminded her of the theatre at S——, where she once went to see a pantomime. It was all dark except the stage, which was fitted like a living-room. In a chair was seated an old man, whom she thought she had seen somewhere before—in fact, she thought it was her father come to life again.

"Presently the old gentleman seemed to get in a rage, and began stamping about and making strange noises, at which Marthe grew frightened. Then suddenly a door opened, and Madame here—her own mother—entered, beautifully dressed, as the child had seen her often when Madame had gone out in the evening, and carrying a violin. Standing in front of the old man, she began to play. Gradually his passion ceased, and he became calm, sank back in his chair, and covered his face with his hands. The sweet sounds seem to have lulled the child also, and she fell once more into sound sleep.

"She remembers nothing more until she felt the night air blowing upon her face, and knew that she was again being carried, her eyes and mouth once more covered. When she stirred, a voice repated the words, 'Don't be afraid—Margaret has you—you are quite safe.' She was carried this time for some distance, until, indeed, old mother Brown's cottage was reached. There she was laid down upon the step, and the person who had brought her knocked loudly at the door until some one was heard stirring within. So much for Marthe, who seems none the worse for her adventures. Now for Mrs. Brown."

During this strange recital I had been watching, with the keenest interest the faces of the other three listeners. At the mention of her name Margaret looked proudly indifferent; but, at the narration of Marthe's dream or vision, she manifested a curious restlessness, fixing her eyes intently upon the Doctor, as though trying to discover his impressions concerning it.

Sir Duncan, on the contrary, was evidently anxious that Miss Beverley should clear herself from all possibility of suspicion. He paid very little attention to any part of the story which did not directly affect her; but, when Margaret was alluded to, he watched her with anxious, pleading eyes, to which she refused to respond.

Mrs. Beverley's countenance expressed meek sorrow at so much wickedness, followed, during the recital of Marthe's dream, by unfeigned surprise, which she tried hard to control. I felt almost sure that she was alarmed. As Doctor Fairfax paused she remarked:

"Marthe has been more communicative to you than to me, Doctor. This is the first I have heard of that ridiculous dream. I fancy she must have invented it for your special benefit."

"I fancy not," replied the Doctor, gravely. "The child's brain is at present too weak and tired for invention. As I explained to you, Madame, it was important that I should see her at once, and alone, if I were to form any just idea of her condition, and as to what happened to her during her absence. She has evidently been drugged, but the effects of the narcotic were but slight during part of the time she was under its influence. The scene which she describes certainly does not seem to come within the bounds of probability; and yet, unless she saw it, or some part of it, I do not know how to account for her hallucination—or, rather, for her clear remembrance of every detail. Had it been a mere vision, I believe the impression would have passed away with the effects of the drug."

I saw Margaret's eyes dilate with eager suggestiveness, which she seemed to find difficulty in repressing. The Doctor glanced at her as though warning her to be silent, and the girl looked away without offering either question or opinion. I wondered what she could possibly have in her mind. Sir Duncan seemed impressed and puzzled at the Doctor's earnestness, while Mrs. Beverley appeared to be greatly annoyed.

"If not entirely imagination," she said, "some cruel trick must have been played. As my poor husband has been dead these three years, and I certainly could not have taken part in it, it remains to identify people and place. But the whole thing seems to me so evidently a dream that I wonder a man of your sense, Doctor, can give it a moment's credence."

"It is no more difficult to believe," answered the Doctor, "than the rest of the story. Am I to believe that Margaret Beverley carried off her sister, with Heaven knows what evil intent—for only by Marthe's disappearance could she benefit—hid her, no one knows where, for over twelve hours, then carried her, or had her carried, out to mother Brown's cottage at an hour when I daresay her friend here can testify that she was safely in bed?"

Involuntarily my eyes met those of Margaret, and her absence from her room and the figure in the park flashed across my mind with a momentary suspicion. Could those two coincidences have had any connection with each other, or with Marthe's strange journey to Mrs. Brown's? Then, beneath the frank, unwavering innocence of her glance, the thought passed away.

At this juncture, Mrs. Beverley had us both at a decided disadvantage.

"I do not think," she remarked significantly, "that Miss Meredith is in a position to testify anything of the sort. In fact, I am quite sure that she cannot deny the fact that Miss Beverley was not in her room last night between the hours of one and two o'clock."

The Doctor gave me a keen look, and Sir Duncan started a little.

"Certainly," I replied boldly; "I have not the slightest wish to make any mystery. Miss Beverley and myself went last night to rouse one of the servants. I thought I saw some one in the park, and a man was sent out to see whther he could find any one."

"It was after two o'clock when John went into the park to make investigations," explained Mrs. Beverley. "By that time my poor Marthe had been taken to Mrs. Brown's, and, of course, the man's errand was fruitless."

At that I lost my temper.

"What do you mean?" I demanded, angrily. "Do you mean to try to implicate me as well as Miss Beverley? Perhaps you think the child had been hidden up here?"

Mrs. Beverley shrugged her shoulders.

"This cottage is peculiarly built," she retorted, "and it is the one portion of the house, which, strangely enough, was not thoroughly searched yesterday. I own that the idea of Marthe's having been hidden here would never have gained ground in my mind, but for this"—and she held up a piece of blue ribbon. "I am certain that I myself tied this ribbon in my child's hair yesterday; this morning it was found by Sophie on the private stair-case of the cottage."

There was a dead silence, for the plot seemed to be woven around us with overpowering clearness; but still Margaret did not lose her calmness. We had a card to play of which Mrs. Beverley knew nothing as yet, but as to the value of which I was becoming more and more impressed.

"Of course," she added, seeing that all the talking was for the present to be left to her, "Miss Meredith could have no direct interest in Marthe's disappearance, but Margaret Beverley would have been in a position to reward her friends had the child been heard of no more."

At this I turned my back upon Mrs. Beverley, for she was beneath contempt.

"Come," said the Doctor, roughly, "we have had enough of assumption for the present. We ought to apologize to Miss Meredith for bringing her into the room to hear herself so maligned."

"I advised her absence," remarked Mrs. Beverley, with the most astonishing effrontery.

"I am much obliged to my friends for giving me the opportunity of hearing all you have to say, Madame," I retorted grimly, and Margaret squeezed my hand.

"Suppose," suggested the Doctor, quietly, "we return to facts—facts as learned from Mrs. Brown. She, I am informed, says that she was aroused by hearing a noise, and went down to see what was the matter. She found Marthe standing at the door, crying and calling for 'Margaret!' No one was to be seen anywhere around, but there was a letter on the doorstep. In the note was a request that Mrs. Brown would keep the child carefully concealed for twenty-four hours, and at the end of that time she would be sent for. No harm was intended to Marthe, and if Mrs. Brown faithfully fulfilled her trust, she would be rewarded with the sum of twenty pounds.

"That was the substance of the letter," continued Doctor Fairfax, "and I must admit that the handwriting is remarkably like that of Margaret Beverley's. Further, every one knows that Mrs. Brown is a pensioner and a devoted adherent of Miss Beverley's. With her, if with any one, that young lady's secret, as well as Marthe's person, would be perfectly safe—indeed the above admissions were only wrung from the woman by fear of the law. You see, Margaret, my dear, I do not spare you. You may have plotted to bring about Marthe's disappearance—who knows? But I confess I should like to fathom, in that case, how you contrived to keep her quiet for so many hours, and what were your ultimate intentions. Where did you mean to send her?"

Margaret only laughed.

"Doctor," she said, "I am not afraid of you. You know that I never touched Marthe to harm her, and that I did not write that letter. Whatever happens to me, you believe that?"

"Yes," replied the Doctor, "I do."

I was glad to notice that Sir Duncan laid his hand upon Margaret's as she turned to him, her face flushed, and eager, for the first time, to speak in self-vindication.

"Miss Beverley deserves to be congratulated on her friends," sneered Mrs. Beverley. "She is prejudged and acquitted, it seems; but everything remains to be proved. Who did take away my child?"

"Ah, yes—who did?" queried the Doctor, drily. "The rest of the story is short. Sophie hears in the village that a woman is seen on the moor during the night—a woman carrying a child apparently. Then Madame Beverley, very properly, goes herself to make inquiries, calls at Mrs. Brown's, threatens to send for the police, and Marthe is discovered unhurt, lying on a bed in a back room or closet, and brought home in triumph. But now it still remains to account, not only for the manner of her hiding during the first twelve hours of her disappearance, but for the scene of which she declares she was a witness. That could hardly have occurred in this cottage."

"A mere dream," declared Mrs. Beverley—"the facts are too evident."

"On the contrary," remarked Margaret, "I am convinced that we shall be enabled to prove its reality."

Her stepmother shrugged her shoulders.

"That is surely assuming a good deal," she answered, derisively. Then she gathered her skirts in her hand and rose, drawing her small figure to its full height. "However," she added, "I think I have no further business here. I have only this to say. Had Miss Beverley met the charge against her in a different spirit, or shown the slightest regret for the suffering I have endured, I should have been willing to pass the matter over in silence, since the plot has failed. As it is, the affair must be thoroughly investigated. I shall place it at once in the hands of my solicitor, and it will be for Miss Beverley to prove the innocence which she now merely assumes. I, for one, cannot doubt that Marthe, when relating what happened while she was in full possession of her senses, speaks the truth. It is absurd to suppose that she could not recognize her sister's voice."

No one answered her, and she swept towards the door. I saw the glance she cast at Sir Duncan in passing; he, however, kept his place by Margaret's side, and I really pitied Mrs. Beverley. For the first time it occurred to me that she had been playing for a higher stake than wealth and position. She loved this man with all the force of a passionate, emotional, but evil nature. As on a previous occasion, Doctor Fairfax held open the door for her to pass through, but Sir Duncan merely bowed, and made no forward movement.

A few moments of silence followed Madame's departure.

"Well," said the Doctor at length, "what is to be the next move?"

Margaret answered quietly:

"Have the entrance to the underground theatre broken open at once!"

"I fear," responded Sir Duncan, "that might prove a ticklish matter. We are none of us in possession, you see, and there seems at present hardly sufficient evidence on which to apply for a warrant. But if the place has been lately utilized, there must be some other entrance, for the one I have seen was completely bricked up."

"I never hard of any other," said Margaret. "Still, there may be one, and we must try to find it, or I will force a way in myself. I shall never rest until that place has been explored. Marthe's disappearance is not the only mystery we have to penetrate."

Miss Beverley was in a state of intense excitement, walking up and down the room, her hands twitching nervously, as though she longed to at once begin the work.

"Certainly the theatre should be examined," agreed the Doctor, "if merely because it is the only known part of the house that so far we have been unable to examine. But I think the best way would be to get Madame's consent."

"She would never give it," asserted Margaret, impetuously.

"Perhaps not; but her refusal would lend color to suspicion, which would be a gain to us. Then we could have recourse to the law—or force."

"And in the meantime?" queried Margaret, desperately.

"In the meantime, have a little patience, my dear Miss Beverley," advised Doctor Fairfax. "I will see Madame again before I leave, put the proposition to her, and hear what she says. If she refuses, not a moment shall be lost, I promise you. But first let me hear a full and particular account of the doings here last night. Both the figure in the park and the wanderings of you two young ladies came upon me as a surprise."

I recounted what I had seen and what had afterwards happened, and the Doctor blamed Margaret for having ventured about the house alone. Probably she had been seen, and the fact might be used against her. Then

he made me point out exactly the spot where I had seen the supposed figure, and Sir Duncan and Margaret were asked to go down to the park and stand about until one of them fell into a similar position to that occupied by my vision of the preceding night.

The Doctor and I stood at the window and watched until Margaret, without much difficulty, fulfilled the required conditions, and, wrapped in her cloak, looked, in the now fast-fading light, not unlike the figure I had seen. Then I waved a white handkerchief to indicate that we were satisfied—but she lingered about the place for some little time afterwards.

I took the opportunity of asking Doctor Fairfax the advantage Margaret would reap if anything happened to her half-sister.

"Why," he replied, "don't you know? The estate is Marthe's for her lifetime only. At her death the whole reverts to Margaret or her heirs. Marthe has no power to will it away. The old man could evidently only be brought to consent to a temporary disinheritance, and, to accomplish that, I believe he was made to credit Margaret's disobedience to his wishes concerning Duncan Drew, as also to think that she had broken her word of honor."

"Concerning Lawson's story, do you think that Mr. Beverley may be still alive?" I inquired.

"So far as Madame's cleverness and wickedness are concerned, I think I told you that I am ready to believe anything. But as to his being still alive—well, it scarcey seems possible that she shoud have carried on such a fraud undetected for three years. Where can the poor fellow be?"

"Marthe's dream is a curious coincidence," I remarked.

"Yes—a curious coincidence," he acquiesced, drily.

"I am afraid that if nothing further is discovered matters look rather bad for Margaret," I ventured to suggest.

"Humph—I don't know!" he replied. "Madame might try to get up a case; but there's a good deal to verify. It would depend greatly upon the letter, which is certainly a clever piece of forgery. The finding of the ribbon is a poor trick—valueless as evidence unless supported. Her risks, anyway, would be serious—greater than ours. But I fancy that if she could gain her ends with Drew and take him from Margaret, she would be glad enough to let the matter drop. However, that would hardly suit us now. The whole thing will have to be cleared up in a court of law, or elsewhere, and the Cloville business thoroughly investigated. Of course Madame does not know we are stirring in that direction, and her ignorance must continue as long as possible. We may force her hand yet, and shall no doubt hear to-morrow what Remington thinks."

As he finished speaking Margaret and Sir Duncan returned. Doctor Fairfax asked the latter to go back with him to dinner, instead of taking the meal in solitude at the Castle, and it was finally arranged that, together with Miss Lucy, they should afterwards return to the cottage for the evening. I was truly thankful, in the exciting state of affairs, that we were not to be left alone.

Before starting, the Doctor went once more to the west wing—this time to suggest that the theatre below should be opened and inspected. He returned in less than a quarter of an hour.

"I have been partially successful," he told us; "but I am hardly satisfied. Madame offers not the slightest objection, but begs—or rather stipulates—that no steps be taken to-night. She says that she feels thoroughly wearied and exhausted with the excitement and events of the day, and wishes to have a few hours quiet."

"To-morrow!" ejaculated Margaret, in a tone of despair. "Who knows what may happen before to-morrow!"

"Let us be explicit," said the Doctor. "If there be any ground for exploring the place at all, there must be some means of access to it already available of which we know nothing. Therefore we might as well wait a hundred years as one night for any good to be gained from our efforts, especially since our tactics are known. Has any one a proposition to offer?"

"I have," responded Sir Duncan. "I propose that we pull down the door to-night, and take the consequences to-morrow!"

This was carried, apparently to the general satisfaction.

The Doctor and Sir Duncan seemed to think that they would prove as able for the work as any other two men, and resolved to keep the undertaking in their own hands. The necessary tools could easily be procured, and they would trust to being able to accomplish their task without disturbing Mrs. Beverley, whom the Doctor had left under the impression that her terms had been acceded to.

Never do I remember hours of greater anxiety and suspense than those which immediately followed this decision. Margaret seemed unable to rest quietly for a moment, and in her eyes I read the wildest expectations, for which I felt foundations were exceedingly slight. I found that she had taken Sir Duncan into her confidence with regard to Lawson's story, and had also given him her own ideas on the subject.

About half-past eight our party returned. Miss Lucy, in whom it had been necessary to confide, was flushed, excited, and almost tearful with anxiety. One might have thought the Doctor was about to face sudden death, to judge from her awe-stricken countenance.

It was decided not to begin operations until the house was closed for the night, and the servants had retired to rest, which would be about eleven o'clock. We tried many ways of whiling away the intervening hours, but none succeeded very well, and finally we drew round the fire and chatted.

At length everything was still in the big house. Not a light was to be seen from the west wing, and it was supposed that Mrs. Beverley had retired early to rest. We were careful to endeavor to give the like impression concerning ourselves, closing shutters and drawing curtains at half-past ten. We had not even admitted Clarice to our councils, but the Doctor had secured a reinforcement in the person of Lawson, whom he had met in the village returning from his mission to Mr. Remington.

At the hour appointed Lawson arrived, and was let into the house at a given signal, after which our party was complete.

Soon after eleven o'clock we reconnoitred and found that the domestics had all gone to bed, and the doors of the west wing were fastened for the night. Then we descended to our task.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## Just an Old Curio.

BY C. J.

"That's my last word, miss; we all have to live, and I can't afford to keep pauper lodgers. The rent's due to-night, and you'll have to pay it or go."

And the woman left the room, slamming the door with a bang.

Chrissie Denning looked round the barren room. The rent must be paid to-night. But how? She clasped her hands tightly, so tightly that the solitary ring she wore cut into the tender flesh, and with a cry the girl slipped the jewel from her finger and regarded it with hopeless eyes. It was a noticeable ring—one large opal, surrounded by diamonds and set in a massive gold band. Her one priceless possession—must it go?

The battle was sharp but short. Raising the gem to her lips she kissed it passionately, murmuring, "Forgive me, mother darling; it is my only hope!" Then donning her shabby black cloak and hat, Chrissie went out into the deepening twilight, and sped swiftly towards the old curiosity shop.

It was a month since Mrs. Denning died—died, as the girl knew, for want of sufficient food. Her father had been killed in a railway accident, leaving Chrissie and her mother—a slender, dark-eyed Italian—with a miserable pittance. They had come to the great city and found employment in providing fancy articles for one of the large shops. But the mother's health gave way, and she sank beneath the load, leaving her daughter to fight the battle alone. Their small earnings were soon spent.

One by one their cherished possessions were turned into money, but the opal Mrs. Denning refused to part with. It had been her betrothal ring—a family jewel—and had never left her finger since her husband first placed it there. Her "Hope" she called it; and gave it to Chrissie, enjoining her to keep it always.

And now the opal must go. It was, indeed, her only "hope," the girl thought sadly, as she gave the gem to the old curiosity man, and received a small sum of money in exchange.

"I hope to buy it back some day," she said. "Will you keep it for me?"

"Well, I'll keep it back a bit," the man replied; "there's no great sale for such things."

Chrissie left the shop, and bent her steps towards an agency where she had entered her name. The matron was busy with a lady, richly dressed, who was speaking with some agitation.

"I want some one at once. The doctors say she must go abroad immediately, and—" She caught sight of the slight figure in shabby mourning, and stopped abruptly; then, moved by some impulse, she turned to Chrissie. "You are in search of employment. Will you come?"

"Madam—" began the matron; but the imperious lady silenced her by a gesture.

"Do you object to travel? You have, perhaps, no friends to leave behind," she said, glancing at the girl's black garments. "I am distracted; we must leave town to-morrow! Only say you will come. I don't mind what I pay."

"But," stammered the bewildered girl, "you don't know me. You never saw me before."

"I can trust your face, and I implore you, come and help save my child."

There were tears in the proud eyes, born of the thought of the delicate little daughter whose life hung on a thread. She took Chrissie's hands.

"You will come?"

"Gladly," returned the girl, "and I will do my utmost to deserve your trust."

—

Once again Chrissie stood in the old curiosity shop. Nine months had passed, during which she had traveled in many countries, and had endeared herself to her patron and her delicate charge. Now that they were settled in Mrs. Charteris' luxurious house the girl took the first opportunity to go and redeem her precious ring.

"It's sold, miss."

"But you promised to keep it!"

"I didn't promise to keep it against all offers," he said. "Some one took a fancy to it, so I let it go. How did I know you would come again?"

Without a word Chrissie left the shop. Her lips trembled beneath the thick veil she wore, and the tears so blinded her that she almost ran into the arms of a man who was passing hastily down the crowded street.

"I—beg your pardon," she stammered.

Val Beverly was too startled to do more than raise his hat as the girl sped on, but the momentary glimpse of those upraised, tear-wet eyes haunted him as he regained his comfortable chambers.

"What the deuce was she doing there, I wonder? She looked like a lady, though I hardly saw her face."

His brows met in a perplexed frown, then with an effort he banished the vision.

"I'll go and look up Mrs. Charteris," he said, "and see this paragon who has done more for Vera than all the doctors put together."

A sound of music issued from Mrs. Charteris' drawing-room, and the young man paused as a rich contralto broke upon his ear. The door was slightly open, and he stood in the shadow, while that pathetic voice crept into his soul.

The room was dimly lit, and he only caught a shadowy glimpse of the singer—a girl, with dark hair curling about a small, pale face—but that voice held him enthralled. Not until the song was ended, and Mrs. Charteris' voice broke the spell, did he reveal himself.

"You, Val? This is delightful! I knew you would soon come to welcome me back. Let me introduce you to Miss Denning. Chrissie, this is Mr. Beverly."

Chrissie came forward with a smile on her lips, for Val Beverly's name was familiar to her; but the smile faded when she saw his face. Would he recognize the girl who had run into his arms from the old curiosity shop? Suppose he should mention it before Mrs. Charteris! Chrissie shivered at the thought, and withdrawing her gaze from Beverly's face, bowed coldly.

"My dear child, what a stony reception!" laughed Mrs. Charteris, and taking the girl's unwilling palm, she placed it in Beverly's palm. "You and Val know each other perfectly by repute, and are to be great friends. Shake hands at once."

Chrissie laughed, but colored, too, as Beverly pressed the irresponsive little fingers warmly.

"I could almost believe we had met before, Miss Denning," he said, "but I suppose that is impossible?"

"Quite." Chrissie met his gaze steadily. "We have never met before, Mr. Beverly."

"But we'll make up for lost time now," soliloquized Val, as he took his departure. "Jove! How jolly glad I am that I refused the girl the mater threw at my head, and insisted on choosing my own wife. It's a blessed thing to be free, then one can choose one's own jailer."

* * * * * *

"And that is all you know about her?" Mrs. Charteris nodded.

"Not much, is it?" said she. Chrissie often wanted to tell me her story, but I saw that the past was painful, and her lovely, truthful face was enough for me."

"It is enough for me. I would trust my soul in the girl's keeping," said Beverly earnestly.

"Has it gone so far? Are you sure you know your own mind, Val?"

"My mind was made up the first day I saw her," said he. "I only wait her will; she insists upon telling me her story first but—"

"You make sure it won't come between you?"

"So sure that I came ready armed."

He drew from his pocket a flashing gem, and laid it on her small palm.

"Opals? Oh, Val, they are unlucky."

"Opals?" Beverly laughed. "I showed you the wrong one. But that is pretty, isn't it?"

"Where did you get it? It looks old."

"It is old; the setting shows that. I picked it up in an old curio shop. Bought it for a mere song, for it is both antique and valuable."

They were engrossed in their subject, and did not hear the door open softly. As Chrissie entered her eyes caught the glitter of gold, and the next moment her astonished gaze rested on the opal ring. Her opal!

"It was left by a girl, quite young but very poor. The man told me," continued Beverly, "she hoped to redeem it some day. Poor child, I expect she's dead long ago, and perhaps better so."

"Oh, look!" Mrs. Charteris had touched a spring in the massive setting and a piece of the ring slid back. "See, Val—a motto. 'Hope on, hope ever.' And initials, too. It has been a betrothal ring; they used to engrave them in old days."

Chrissie had drawn nearer; twice she essayed to speak, and failed. But Mrs. Charteris, looking up suddenly, saw the girl standing there. Her eyes were fastened on the gleaming opal, and her white lips escaped her friend's notice.

"Look, Chris. Isn't it lovely? Val has been telling me its story."

"I heard." Chrissie spoke with difficulty. "A sad story, was it not?"

"Sad? Yes, too sad for your ears," said Beverly. "I expect you're right, Mrs. Charteris; it is an old betrothal ring; but"—with an involuntary glance at Chrissie—"I could never offer it to my wife. The beautiful gem has probably a black mark against it."

"A black mark!" Chrissie's white lips whispered the words; they rang in her ears. "A black mark!" How could she tell her story now? She met Beverly's eyes, and the misery on her face startled him. Of what was he reminded as he met that stricken gaze?

Like a flash it returned to him—the dark street, the dim old shop, and the slight, black figure blinded with grief, that stumbled into his arms.

"Chrissie!" He started forward, but she moved away, and the anguish in her eyes turned to scorn.

"You remember?" she said. "Yes, it was I you met. But there is no black mark against that ring, Mr. Beverly. It was my mother's."

"My darling. How can I gain forgiveness? Oh, Chrissie, to think that you were ever in such poverty, and alone."

"But it is over now," she whispered. "Mrs. Charteris saved me then; and you, Val, have you not given me back my 'Hope'?" glancing at the beauteous gem on her finger. "Do you know, I always used to wish that mother's betrothal ring might also some day be mine."

—If called upon to give an unfavorable opinion as to a saying or a work of which you disapprove, do not be eager to communicate your disapprobation merely because your self-love is flattered by the appeal made to your judgment.

—Every evil to which we do not succumb is a benefactor. We gain the strength of the temptation we resist.

### THE BRAVE.

BY COLLINS.

How sleep the brave who sink to rest
By all their country's wishes blest!
When spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall press a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honor comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

## Aunt and Orderly.

BY A. B.

It was a glad day for Count Oreste d'Agliano when he bade good-bye to the Military Academy and donned his epaulettes. And then, what luck was his! To be appointed to a regiment in garrison in Turin, the city of his birth, the place where almost all his relations and so many of his friends resided.

"D'Agliano has all the luck," grumbled his chum, young Castellengo, who was dolefully packing his traps to join his regiment far down in the wilds of the Abruzzi, where bears and brigands were about the only sources from which there was any hope of diversion. "D'Agliano has all the luck. Not that I grudge it him, for he is the best fellow that ever lived—but—" He did not exactly know what he meant. He had not yet read "La Rochefoucauld," and was too young to be aware of there being a dash of displeasure for the best of us in the good fortune of our friends, as there is a touch of the reverse on hearing of their discomfiture.

Poor human nature is so wofully weak, and in such constant need of a moral pick-me-up.

D'Agliano's cup of felicity was actually brimming over. Even when rank and wealth, friends, health and a handsome person are not there to add their weight, the first year or so of a young officer's life is like a dream of enchantment. The cadet's fetters have fallen to the earth, and upon the wings of newly-acquired freedom and relative importance, he soars forth into a new world where all, for time at least, is alluring and bright.

The young lieutenant's intoxication is far deeper than that of the youthful maiden floating forth under her mother' wing upon the sunlit waters of "Society." Heaven itself seems to him to be within the reach of his outstretched hand, while her ecstasy is more or less confined within the limits of flirtation and finery. Oreste's father and mother were kindly, sensible people, who, while they desired to have their son with them under the same roof, were far too reasonable to expect or exact a head of fifty upon the shoulders of a youth whose epaulettes had only just sprouted forth; so they had a suite of rooms comfortably arranged for him in the entresol of their hotel, where he would be free to go and come as he pleased, receive his comrades and transact any business he might have, without trespassing upon either his own liberty or their laws. The household was a most orderly one, peace and punctuality reigned paramount within it; young officers were noisy at times, and their service did not always permit of their being punctual. It was better not to risk any possibility of even the most trifling clash. The Count and Countess knew their son too well to have any fear of his abusing his liberty. His place at their table was, of course, always kept for him, but he was free to occupy it, or not, without being subjected either to question or reproof.

Goody-goody people threw up hands and eyes and declared that it was flying in the face of Providence thus to fling occasion in the young Count's way, but the goody-goodies were wrong, as they often are, and the parents never had a moment's need to repent of the confidence they had placed in their son.

One of the servants of the establishment was deputed to keep Oreste's rooms in order; for his personal attendance he had his orderly. No civilian servant can keep military accoutrements in the trim in which they should be kept.

And, as far as brushing and furbishing went, Lorenzo was perfection. Beyond those he left much to be desired. He was obtuse to a degree. But then he was honest and affectionate, attached to the family—his father was one of the Count's tenants, and Oreste and Lorenzo had fished and fought, bathed and battled together when boys, and, all taken together, these qualities quite outweighed the lack of acuteness with which Mother Nature had afflicted him.

He was of middling height, had fair hair—closely cropped, of course—blue eyes, upturned nose, ruddy complexion, a nascent moustache, and a wart on on cheek. In short, he could never have been taken for anything but the Piedmontese he was, and might, at any moment, have sat for the portrait of "Gianduja," the typical personage representing that province of Italy in which the first noble aspirations after national independence and union sprang.

It is only in the natural course of things that a brilliant young officer like Oreste d'Agliano should be in love, and in love he was; not in the usual manner of his kind, with half a dozen momentary goddesses at a time, a spark here, a new flame there. Our young man did much better. He fell in love with the brightest and nicest girl in all Turin, Marie Ferrari, daughter of the Baron and Baroness of that name, now an orphan, and living with an elderly aunt of her mother's.

Marie was rather below the usual height, well-rounded in form, and was one to whom the words "nut-brown maid" could be aptly applied; dusky hair, dusky eyes and dark complexion. A girl full of fun and with a heart of gold.

Little other gold, however, for she was dowerless, and wholly dependent upon her aunt.

This aunt, Mademoiselle della Rocchetta, was a spinster of uncertain age very rich, very plain, very much feared and run after by all Turin "Society." In virtue of her being a Canoness she invariably wore the decoration of her Order, and, had she chosen, could have called herself "Madame." She did not choose, influenced, perhaps, by some secret hope of yet becoming "Madame" with a husband attached to the title, a fact that would have pleased her better, indefinitely better, than to owe the distinction merely to the privilege of the Order to which she belonged. So she remained Mademoiselle della Rocchetta for all the world, and was the only person, unfortunately for herself, who ever dreamt of her becoming anything else.

Some say that marriages are made in heaven. If so, Vittoria della Rocchetta's projected husband must have lost his way in coming down. He never came to hand.

In early days there had been somtalk of a marriage between her and Oreste's father, but it all came to nothing without anybody's exactly knowing the reson why.

Th lady chiefly interested did, however, know the wherefore, and, feeling conscious of having ill-treated her intended, naturally hated him sincerely ever afterwards.

They used to meet in society because they could not help doing so; but Mademoiselle's voice always grew a shade sharper, and her remarks many degrees severer whenever she found herself in his unwelcome presence.

Yet they went to each other's houses, and sat at each other's tables even, at times, for the great little world in which they moved would have suffered had they not done so. Mademoiselle della Rocchetta played the harp like Godefroi—the Countess d'Agliano the piano in masterly style. Their duets were features too charming altogether to be eliminated from musical and other parties. Society declared that they must remain outwardly decent friends, and, as usual, society was obeyed. Not that the Countess had anything against her ex-rival, though from the difference of their characters they could not possibly assimilate very well. One was oil, the other vinegar—the very thing their social salad needed. Madame remained indifferent then; music even had failed to soothe Mademoiselle's "savage breast." It generally does in those who are the executors. Temper, I have observed, is rather a dominant defect in the great disciples of the Art.

It was in June. Many of them had left town for Pegli, Viareggio, etc., and among them Count and Countess d'Agliano. Oreste was the sole master in the big d'Agliano hotel. His service did not permit of his absenting himself. In order to save trouble to himself and others Lorenzo used to fetch in his daily dinner from the Cafe de Paris.

Mademoiselle della Rocchetta and her nut-brown niece were among the lingerers. The former had one last dinner party to give ere taking wing.

To this dinner Oreste had manoevred for and got an invitation. Marie had undoubtedly seconded him, and that, combined with the momentary dearth of men to make up the table, had insured success.

The two young people looked forward to a happy evening with all the ardor of youth and a first passion. Grim disappointment, however, fell upon them. A fussy old General came to Turin with the notion in his head that, if he did not hold a certain inspection, the country would at once go to wrack and ruin. Oreste was appointed to attend him. The honor was great, yet not half so great as d'Agliano's graceless unwillingness to shoulder it. He was allowed no choice in the matter, however. But that unwillingness rose to dismay, and, I fear, boiled over in language more forcible than polite, on his being informed that the General had fixed upon the very day of Mademoiselle della Rocchetta's party, and that he was expected to pass the entire evening with the old martinet in the revisal of certain documents. Never had Lorenzo seen his lieutenant give way to such a display of excitement. Epithets, the reverse of flattering, flew from his lips like sparks from a catherine-wheel. It was quite as well that General Ficanoso was safely out of hearing.

But one cannot splutter forever. Oreste came to the end of his epithets, though not of his ire, and flung himself upon his sofa.

It was close on seven. The General expected him at his hotel at eight. Till the last hour he had hoped for a reprieve, but none came. He must grin and bear it, and dine.

"Lorenzo, you must go at once to Mademoiselle della Rocchetta's, via Santa Teresa, you know, No. 7, and say that I am kept on service and cannot go to dinner. Now, mind you don't bungle. And you must bring me my dinner here. Take your basket with you. And look sharp about it."

Lorenzo saluted, wheeled about, and hastened to obey his master's orders. He was obedience itself, and, had he told him to mount guard at the Palazzo gates in shirt and drawers, he would have done so, and kept his post till marched off by the police.

Forth he trudged, the tall basket with its stores of dainty silver dishes upon his arm. The way was short, his steps were sturdy; he soon reached Mademoiselle della Rocchetta's door.

He mounted the stairs, rang, and was admitted. The odor of savory viands greeted his expanded nostrils.

"Ah, what a good dinner my master is going to have," he murmured to himself. "I hope there'll be something left for me! These restaurant portions are cruelly small, but there——"

Further thought was put an end to by Mademoiselle's man-servant coming forward. Lorenzo delivered his message without a flaw. Then, taking up his basket, which he had set down beside him, he held it out to the man, adding:

"My master told me to bring his dinner to him, as he could not come to eat it here."

"What!" exclaimed the astounded domestic.

"To bring the dinner back. And, pray, look sharp, for I have no time to lose. The dishes are all clean—I washed them myself."

Marie had heard and recognized Lorenzo's voice. She came into the hall to see what had brought him there.

Lorenzo repeated his tale.

A quiver of repressed laughter flitted over her face; then she was grave as a judge again. She had taken in the whole situation at a glance, as all judges do not always do, and had determined to carry out the joke.

"Yes—it's all right. There, Carlo, take the basket—it's a wager the lieutenant has made—and take it to the kitchen to be filled. The best of all, remember. Tell the cook I sent you. Stay—I'll go myself."

All the household worshipped Marie, so there was neither difficulty nor demur.

The dishes were daintily filled under her superintendence, and, by accident we must suppose, a knot of rosebuds found their way from her bosom into the plate holding the dessert; the basket was handed to Lorenzo by the wondering Carlo, and then carried safely back to the Hotel d'Agliano.

"Well, I never!" mused Carlo, as he waited at table. "Well, I never! I've served in great houses for over thirty years and never came across such a thing before. What is the world coming to?"

He was at no loss to know what he was coming to later, on catching sight of his mistress's face as he dreamily poured any amount of red wine over the snowy damask instead of into the glass held him to be filled. Experience had taught him.

It would be impossible to describe Oreste's state of mind when Lorenzo presented himself with his basket, and, taking out the first dish, said:

"Ah, yes, Mademoiselle della Rocchetta's portions are nearly double those of the cafe."

I shall not even try to describe it. Suffice it to say that Lorenzo, in an agony of grief, at last blurted out:

"Oh, Signor, Signor, beat me, beat me, do anything you like but look at me in that manner."

His master halted for a moment in his feverish march up and down the room, and then flung himself into a chair with literally a roar of laughter.

The comic part of the history blazed forth in such force as to fling all the rest into the shade.

The morning's fatigue, the General's prosiness, the orderly's stupidity, the evening delights yet awaiting him, all vanished like mist before the sun. He could only think of Mademoiselle la Canonichessa and roar. That it should just happen to her of all people in the world! To her who was prim and formal to a degree; who had once declined to see the two fingers held out to her by a Royal Highness; who would not rise to receive any man in the world under the rank of an Excellency.

Ah, it was quite too good!

So also was the dinner which he wisely sat down to attack with appetite. That laugh had done him a world of good. A buffoon is better than bitters. So he ate vigorously—almost as vigorously as did Lorenzo the remains of the feast. Then, slipping the knot of roses into his breast and re-buttoning his tunic, he hurried forth to join the General.

On reaching the hotel another surprise greeted him. He found the General sitting upon the balcony overlooking the square, and, before he had sat beside him a quarter of an hour, discovered that the martinet of the morning was quite a different person to the friendly old body next him in the evening. Possibly a first-rate dinner and the Barbera had brought it about.

There was no mention even made of the documents. On the contrary, the talk took a most unofficial turn, and, in relating two or three madcap adventures of his youth, the old gentleman seemed to fling away his years as he did the ashes of his cigar.

Without well knowing how, Oreste suddenly found himself relating his late mishap to his host. How he laughed, and how Oreste's amazement redoubled when, starting up, he said:

"We'll go and look up Victoria—she's my step-sister, you know."

D'Agliano did not know. However, he was delighted to learn it. The friendly old warrior would set things all right for him once more. And who knows? Visions of Marie at the altar with the General giving her away to his own radiant self floated like a mirage before him.

They soon reached the Canonichessa's door, rang, and were admitted. Carlo smothered a titter on seeing the lieutenant. Disdaining the ceremony of announcement, the General hooked hold of his companion and entered the saloon. Walking straight up to his step-sister, he said:

"A pretty trick, mademoiselle, to give a dinner and omit me. There's a long difference in years between us, I know; but I didn't think you'd forget me like that!"

"But how was I to know you were here! If you had had the grace to let me know——"

"Well, I am here, so let bygones be bygones. Why, Victoria, you look younger every time I see you."

He dropped into a chair beside her.

"There, d'Agliano, make your bow and join your other friends, for I suppose you've plenty of them here."

His old eyes twinkled as he spoke. Had he smelt a rat? Oreste hoped that he had, and blessed him as he turned away. His hostess had received him icily enough; but she had received him, thanks to the General. She owed almost all she had in the world to his forbearance and kindness. Had d'Agliano presented himself under another aegis, or alone, who knows how things would have ended? As it was, they appeared to be progressing

pleasantly enough. Groups of guests were conversing gaily—the hostess and her step-brother laying their heads together. They met for a few hours every two or three years only, so, of course, had much to say to each other. No one cared to disturb the tete-a-tete.

In the last of the three saloons two others were seated together upon a little sofa in a corner more or less screened by a group of palms. They, too, appeared to have much mutually to relate.

"I was so sorry afterwards that I had done it! I don't know how it was, but I could not resist! If you had seen Carlo's face when I told him to take the basket to the kitchen! Yes; but it was very wrong. Can you forgive me?"

Oreste looked down into her face with a smile that said plainly he would have forgiven her anything on earth.

"And my aunt! It was as good as a play. Felicie told her—Felicie always tells her everything, you know. I don't think I shall ever keep a French maid when I'm married. They are so tiresome in a house."

D'Agliano vowed to himself that if ever he should have a voice in the matter she should have a maid from among the Hottentots if so it pleased her.

"Yes, Aunt Victoria was simply sublime. 'Prendre votre maison pour la boutique d'un traiteur!' exclaimed Felicie. 'Prendre ma maison pour une gayotte!' echoed my aunt."

Oreste laughed.

"'One sees how that young——'" she hesitated.

"Say it out—I'm not thick-skinned."

"Well, 'that young jackanapes thinks and speaks of me at home. If he spoke with respect, that oaf of his would never had committed such an unpardonable blunder.'"

"Poor Lorenzo! I suppose he had better keep clear of the house for a while?"

"Yes, I think he had."

"And then?"

"I wasn't a bit sorry for my aunt, you know. Rather glad. It did her good. A storm like that clears the air for a while. She nags less after it."

"Poor Marie!"

He felt a terrible temptation to take her hand, but resisted.

"Oh, I'm pretty used to it! Not that it's pleasant."

"I should think not!"

"But it's all right now. That dear old General! I have not seen or heard of him for years and years. I was a little girl in short frocks the last time he came here. He brought me no end of marrons glaces, I remember."

"Do you like sweets?"

"I adore them! But here they come, and——"

"'Talk of the'—you know the rest."

Marie had risen and crossed to the piano. Oreste turned and pretended to be deeply interested in a photo hanging near him. A touch on the shoulder made him start. There stood the General with a comical mingling of triumph and ire upon his Punch-like features.

"It's all right, my boy—it's all right. But that sister of mine is a regular—well, a regular Tartar. Come."

Oreste accompanied the General downstairs. He asked no questions of either how, why or where; but he felt as if he could have hugged Punch to his heart and kissed him.

"So," said the old man, turning and halting for a moment to lay his hand upon the young man's arm—"so you fancied that I didn't understand how the land lay, did you? Your first words betrayed you—to say nothing of your face—every time you mentioned Marie. Believe me, old-fashioned we may be and are—I rejoice in that—but we are not the old fogies that you youngsters are so fond of dubbing us. Now, good night till to-morrow."

They parted on the street, each going his own way.

* * * * *

The General allowed the grass to grow under nobody's feet. Thanks to him, all concerned lived in a perfect fever during the next fortnight. The Count and Countess came to town—notaries scribbled—milliners stitched. The demons of unrest ran rife in Mademoiselle della Rocchetta's rooms.

"I wish it was over," muttered Victoria.

"I wish it was over," echoed Fifine.

"That idiot of an orderly!" ejaculated the former.

"Still, he's a pleasant enough fellow," sighed the latter.

Yes; had it not been for Lorenzo's idiotical escapade, who knows how things might have dragged on? Perhaps to end in nothing after all. But for him the General would never have gone near his step-sister, and then——

So it was no wonder if, on the day of the wedding, louis d'or galore found their way into his horny palm. In spite of a hundred commissions a day and aching legs at night, he cordially wished that his lieutenant could take unto himself a wife monthly.

"Well, I always said it," growled Castellengo from amidst the Abruzzi and the bears—"that D'Agliano is too lucky a fellow by half!"

Then he sat him down straightway and scribbled off the cheeriest, kindest reply to the letter in which Oreste had conveyed him the happy intelligence. He would have liked to blossom out in a sonnet, but, after several attempts, was forced to give it up in despair and content himself and friends with sober prose.

## WHAT SOME COLLECT.

In a window of a certain Continental bric-a-brac shop is a notice informing passers-by that special attention is given to the needs and requirements of collectors, adding that articles of vertu are sought for with dispatch and almost unvarying success. The proprietor is a typical Frenchman, suave and business-like, and not averse to a chat.

"I have some strange clients," he said, during a recent interview. "One of them—a gentleman—has a passion for monumental brasses. Whatever I find in that way I always submit to him for his refusal. He has a wall along part of his garden to which these strange objects of his collection are usually attached. The choicest specimens he has had inserted in the paneling of one of the rooms in his house. And not, perhaps, the least queer act on his part is to have his own amongst them in the same place—with the date of death left blank, of course.

"Another client, a lady, is a collector of teeth—the teeth of criminals, celebrated personages, the teeth of cannibals, and, in a word, all kinds of teeth which have anything of a history. She preserves her specimens in cabinets, in tiny boxes, with a label giving details and any interesting particulars concerning the specimens attached to each one. Then there is the wife of a rich American, who has resided here for six or seven years, who collects the shoes of all ages and countries. Her hobby has already cost her a small fortune.

"Lately I have been buying up large numbers of sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century buttons for a lady collector. Some samples I have discovered and purchased have been very costly. Some exquisite samples of buttons were in fashion about a hundred years ago, many having beautifully painted miniatures in the centre, which were surrounded with either precious stones or paste. I have given in some cases as much as two hundred and fifty francs for a single button."

## DOLLS.

A great centre for the manufacture of dolls is in Thuringia, in Germany. In one district of this province almost every house is a doll factory, a doll having to pass through a great many hands before it is finished. First the body is made, this being composed of papier mache, linen stuffed with hay, or simply a piece of wood, turned upon a lathe. The best dolls have bodies of leather, stuffed with hair. Arms and legs are made in iron molds, and when quite dry are joined together; these, with the bodies all roughly finished, are sent from the houses where they are made to the central factory, where the limbs are fixed to the proper bodies in various ways, according to their price. The cheaper kind have arms and legs joined to the trunk by means of glued pieces of muslin, but the more expensive are so made that a broken limb can be replaced, whilst the best dolls always have porcelain heads; these, too, being made in the district. The eyes for the dolls are also made in the Sonneberg district, at a glass-blowing establishment in the mountains, whence they are brought to the factory in paper bags, each containing a gross of the same size. These bags do not always contain eyes of the same color, although of the same size. Some of the dolls have movable eyelids, and these are very difficult to make, as are also the speaking dolls which are provided with little bellows, into which the air enters when a string is pulled. Directly the string is let go the air from the bellows escapes through a narrow aperture in which a minute ball, made of some very light material, jumps up and down under the pressure of the air, thus making the sound of "mamma" or "papa." This doll-making industry is the mainstay of the inhabitants of this particular district in Thuringia.

## SETTLING IT.

The old fable of the lawyers and the oyster, in which the ownership of an oyster being contested the lawyers ate the oyster and gave a shell to each of the litigants, is matched by a story of a lawsuit which a Russian newspaper relates as entirely authentic.

In a city of Poland two men came into court with a suit over the ownership of an umbrella which had been left in a restaurant. Each one introduced evidence to prove that the umbrella was his. Being unable to match the wisdom of Solomon by dividing the umbrella between them, the judge postponed the case. Pending its decision the umbrella was left in his Honor's private room.

Later, as he left the court to go home, the judge found that the weather was rainy. He went back to his room, took the umbrella which was in litigation, and spread it over his head in the street. But on his way home he went into a restaurant, and left the umbrella on the rack; and when he was ready to leave the place he found that it had been taken away by some unknown customer.

Then he bought another umbrella and took it to his court-room. When the case came up the litigants were confronted with it, and neither was able to identify it as his own.

The court thereupon fined them both for invoking the law on a frivolous pretext, and they departed empty-handed and decided "non-suited."

Self-Mastery.—Undirected, unguided, and ungoverned, strong passions and a strong will may lead to ruin. A child who possesses these, and who grows up uncontrolled and never learning self-control, has a terrible future in store for him. If his possibilities for good were great, so are his possibilities for evil. Plato says, "Great criminals are perverted heroes;" or, in the words of another, "Gigantic selfishness is possible only to men of vast ability." Yet even here, it is not the power which has wrecked them, but the lack of the highest power of all, that of self-mastery. This is the crowning glory of man—not that the reason, the judgment, and the conscience shall conquer or destroy desire, impulse and passion, but that they shall so control and guide them as to direct their vast capacities into channels for good and not for evil.

Marriage.—It is usual to attribute the misery in the world to intemperance and other vicious habits. There are, however, causes behind actual viciousness. Much of the unhappiness and want which exist are traceable to imprudent marriages. The woman who promises to "love and honor" one of whom she is not sure that he possesses a lovable and honorable character may entail upon herself a life of wretchedness. And the man who heedlessly covenants to keep the life of the woman who trusts him as his own is taking a responsibility of which he should well ponder the weight. The inexperience of youth, scorning the wisdom of those who are capable of advising, will often persist. But, if you must marry, do not run away to do it, lest you wish afterward that you could only run back.

## EXTERNAL INFLUENCES.

Matthew Arnold, in an admirable essay on criticism, says that "for the creation of a master work of literature two powers must concur—the power of the man and the power of the moment; and the man is not enough without the moment." This is a truth that relates not only to literature but is of far wider applicability. In every work that is truly well done and productive of good results these two powers must unite on common ground. They must harmonize, fit into each other, be adapted to one another, and so mutually aid and develop each other. The seed, however perfect, cannot germinate until it comes into contact with the warm and moist soil; the lungs, however healthy and capacious, cannot act except under certain atmospheric conditions; and in like manner the capacities of man cannot flourish and bear fruit except under appropriate external influences.

# Scientific and Useful.

Paper Coffins.—Many undertakers are now using cheap coffins pressed out of paper pulp. When polished and stained such coffins look almost as well as those of wood. They last longer in the ground than coffins of wood or metal, and they can be hermetically sealed better than heavy metal ones.

Sawdust as Fuel.—Sawdust is transformed into transportable fuel in Germany by a simple process. It is heated under high steam pressure until the resinous elements become sticky, when it is pressed into bricks. One man with a two-horse power machine turns out 9000 bricks per day, heating value not stated.

Ships as Lightning Rods.—The reason why ships are not struck by lightning is attributed to the general use which is now made of wire rope for rigging purposes, as well as to the fact that the hulls of ships are usually constructed of iron or steel. Thus the whole ship forms an excellent and continuous conductor, by means of which the electricity is led into the ocean and dissipated.

For Easy Writing on Trains.—The rolling stock of German State railroads has been provided with an appliance which will enable passengers on board a train to write without difficulty, and regardless of the motion of the train. The new appliance consists of a board suspended from the ceiling of the car by strong but elastic cords, which will prevent the vibration of the moving train from interfering with the writer.

A Chemical Blotting Pad.—A cheap and excellent substitute for blotting paper may be extemporized as follows: Mix fourteen parts (by weight) of gypsum and two of potato flour, with sufficient water to produce a plastic paste. Pour or press into a suitable mould. As soon as the mass has become hard and dry it affords an admirable blotter.

# Farm and Garden.

The Horse Does This: A good horse can travel 400 yards in four and a half minutes at a walk, 400 yards in two minutes in a trot, and 400 yards in one minute in a gallop. The usual work of a horse is taken at 22,500 pounds raised one foot per minute for eight hours per day. A horse will carry 250 pounds twenty-five miles per day of eight hours.

The Destruction of Trees: Attention is called to the fact that a great many trees through which electric wires pass are dead. After heavy rains many of these trees begin to droop and die. The leaves, saturated with moisture, lead the current down into the body of the tree. The companies claim that all of the wires are insulated, but constant swinging among the branches cuts off the covering, and the wire becomes bare. A great deal of complaint is being made, and suits are to be brought against the electric companies.

Timber: A country cannot continue to be populous nor highly civilized when its forests, or their equivalent in coal, are lost to it. But this loss has been experienced by many nations. The whole Eastern world was once well wooded. Roman and Greek writers assure us of this. Vast regions of Europe and Asia, by wars and wantonness and imprudence, have been stripped of their forests. A belt of woodland stretching from the Pyrenees to the Himalayas has been swept away, and that whole region, once fertile and populous, now barely sustains a people scanty in numbers. It is a significan. fact that great deserts now occupy the original seat of the human race, and extend on every route of their migrations. Humboldt is reported as saying: "Men in all climates seem to bring upon future generations two calamities at once—a want of fuel and a scarcity of water." The two come alike from the destruction of the forests.

I was taken with a harsh, dry Cough. I grew steadily worse. My neighbors thought I was going into that dreadful disease, consumption. A friend recommended Jayne's Expectorant, which I tried, and in less than ten days I was cured.—(Mrs.) W. A. GROVE, Sterling Centre, Maine, Oct. 31, 1885.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

ISSUED WEEKLY AT 425 ARCH ST.

PHILADELPHIA, AUGUST 21, 1897.

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**The sudden death of Mr. A. E Smythe, late publisher of THE POST, and the legal formalities consequent on settlement of his estate constitute the cause of, and our apology for, the delay in issue of the paper.**

**We ask your indulgence and patience for a few days, as we expect to be regularly on time commencing with issue of 28th instant.**

### As to Wooing.

Theoretically the wooing stage, which may be made to include the time from the first love-blushes up to the day of marriage, is the brightest and happiest in a man or woman's career. It is a period which poets have appropriated as their special theme, so picturesque is it, so full of romance and music. Married life, until we become Darbies and Joans, is lightly esteemed by the makers of verse, and the period before love's awakening is hardly regarded by them at all, except as a means of studying innocent children. The extremes of age are held to be poetical; but the long intervening stretch would seem to have nothing in it to awake the muses except the wooing stage.

Now we would not deny the picturesqueness of wooing, and that not merely on the score that what every one says must be right, but also because personal observation leads to the conclusion that the epoch is a romantic one. You have seen, if you have not felt and let us hope that you have not missed the direct experience that it is a time when life is quickened to an amazing, almost an alarming extent. So great does vitality become that it is a matter of common satire that love fills not only the sould but the body. Instead of eating heartily as was your wont, you will peck at your food and taste little bits here and there. Your sleep, too, will be broken. You will lie awake at night and awaken early in the morning. These are the very commonest symptoms known to the most matter-of-fact of those who do their own wooing. The period is, then, a picturesque one on that we may be agreed. It is interesting to watch in moderation; it is still more interesting to go through. But it is the blissful unchecked period which its painters would have us believe—which indeed we try to make ourselves believe? Is it, above all other periods, the most enchanting?

Well, it depends upon how we look at it. To say that it is in the highest degree an emotional time is to state a truism. But is the emotional the highest type of enjoyment? Is not wooing rather an anxious worrying preliminary to a comfortable contented time? Is it two forms of life which is necessary to a desirable change, but is in itself an uncomfortable period? Probably there would be as many answers to this question as there were persons to answer it, in which case we should certainly find many to condemn the wooing stage even more severely perhaps than it deserves to be condemned, if indeed it is to be condemned at all.

But assuming the wooing state of mind brings certain worries with it, the sorrows do not end when the wooing is over and the lady is won. The period of engagement is no doubt in many respects very picturesque; but it too, has its drawbacks. Creatures as we are of moods and temperaments, limited as we are in our capacity to give and receive pleasure, to conform our actions to our desires, is it to be wondered that there are many hitches occurring during an engagement to mar its beauty? In theory there can be nothing more delightful than the two hearts that beat as one; but what allowance do we make for the nasty temper that will sometimes burst through the carefully-assumed restraint, and for the differences of opinion that will now and again assert themselves uncomfortably with the best-assorted lovers? Married life, of course, presents the same problems; but often time has taught us wisdom, or it has at least brought us to a fuller and a wiser knowledge of each other's limitations. But the period of engagement is one of sensitive intensity.

What allowance are we to make for the mere weariness of the flesh? Suppose the not common instance, when one of the two is dead-beat, tired out, and is yet expected to receive the assiduous attentions of the other with sprightly cheerfulness! There are some things stronger than love, and a jaded body and a worried overwrought mind cannot respond as one desires to the love-songs of another, charm he or she never so well. You have not in these early stages arrived at a proper understanding of one another's characteristics. You think you have, but you have not. And a momentary differentiation in mood may be altogether misunderstood by a volatile overcharged mind. What if he stays away, when he ought to be on duty, from sheeer weariness? What if she, worried by a succession of anxieties, answers shortly the flow of idealisms and metaphors that he pours out? What if a letter is shorter than its accustomed length? What if an eagerly-looked-for fixture is set aside because of a pressing engagement? To the man or woman not in love with each other these are trifles, to be explained and to be understood.

In speaking of these difficulties which beset the path of wooers and wooed, we do not apply them to the most unreasonable people alone. It is very largely the intensity of passion which determines these little rifts. Just as a smash in an express-train is worse than one in a freight, so ardent lovers are prone to the most serious quarrels. The sobriety of married life will thin out the difference and render each party more capable of a quiet understanding of them. While you are yet lovers there is always a greater or less feeling of uncertainty which puts you on the alert, not stimulating you to vigilant wisdom perhaps, but to somewhat suspicious activity. The quarrels are not quarrels of hate, but of love, and through them all you really come closer together, though you may sometimes seem to grow apart. It is seldom that a lovers' quarrel has terminated an engagement permanently, except in those instances where each party has been too obstinate to acknowledge error and so pave the way for a return to a condition which each desires. No—though a quarrel is often used as an excuse for parting when love on one side has waned, the ending of an engagement is brought about more by indifference, where each drifts his or her way without violent rupture, until the separation becomes so wide that it cannot be bridged over.

The sorrows of wooing, however, are slight compared with its pleasures. One does not advance them seriously as arguments, for there is no domain of human interests where arguments are more utterly useless or thrown away. The most that can be said with regard to the matter is that wooing is merely a preliminary, and it is a mistake to lay too much stress upon it as an ideal period. As an ideal it is undoubtedly outshone by the married state. The wooing stage is often too perturbed to be altogether desirable, except as an inevitable means to an end. Take it away, and half the beauty of marriage is destroyed; but, for all that, it is not a period which one would wish to see prolonged. Long wooing and a long engagement are apt to tear people too much to tatters, or to leave them more indifferent than might be desired. A long life at high pressure is wearing, and the wooing stage is undoubtedly one of high pressure. It must not be too short, or there is the liability of taking a hasty step that is practically irrevocable. But it should not be too long, or the step may after all be taken with a lack of interest which is of all things least desirable. In discussing the sorrows of wooing, we have thought rather of the serious man, to whom marriage is a possibility, than of the youthful Adonis whose callow love is simply adventurous experimenting.

—Selfishness is one of the deadliest enemies of home-life. It is a debasing and injurious trait of character anywhere, but is especially pernicious in the home, because the essential spirit of the home is unselfishness. Here all should seek not their own, but the things of others. Self-denial is the highest honor, and he who practises it the most unobtrusively is the most valuable member of the household. He will contribute most to its happiness, and will himself be most highly esteemed.

—There are people who never allow any interference with their settled plans, but they are not the most agreeable of friends or the kindest of neighbors. Their self-absorption may produce wonderful results, and their talents multiply exceedingly, but there is apt to be a hardness which is repellent. In beautiful contrast to these selfish and rigid individuals are the sunny natures that seem always able to "make time" for every duty, every pleasure, and who smilingly endure vexatious interruptions.

—Probably no influence is so powerful in awakening the affections of the human heart as sympathy; there are few, even of the most rugged natures, whom it does not influence. It constrains much more powerfully than force can do. A kind word or a kind look will affect those with whom coercion has been tried in vain. Sympathy invites love and obedience; harshness provokes aversion and resistance.

"Who knows not, and knows not that he knows not is a fool—shun him." says a well known Arabian proverb. "Who knows not, and knows that he knows not, is humble—teach him. Who knows, but knows not that he knows, is asleep—wake him. Who knows, and knows that he knows, is wise—follow him."

—Flattery should never be received in any other light than that you have merited a word of praise for something you have accomplished which shall suffice to support your self-confidence. The sweet tongue is more often a foe than a friend when it greets you with flattery.

What we wish to remember we must thoroughly possess. If it is in the line of our work, we must be master of it, not only laboring diligently, but understanding each step, being interested in each detail, seeing the relation of each part to the whole, and cultivating a passion for excellence.

—If the simple attitude of quiescence and waiting be secured, the emotion of anger and the desire for revenge will usually pass away together, and better feelings, wiser counsels, and truer views will take their place.

—It is not the absence of anger, but ability to control and to limit it, that we honor in a man. Never to be angry speaks of weakness rather than strength, and supineness rather than energy.

## Correspondence.

CHESTER.—Dolly Varden is one of the characters in Dickens' "Barnaby Rudge." She was very much loved by Joe Willet Hugh, of the Maypole Inn, and Simon Tappertit. Dolly dressed in the Watteau style, and was exceedingly lively and pretty. Her father, Gabriel Varden, was a locksmith.

G. B. F.—As commonly understood, a parricide is a person who murders his father or mother; one who murders an ancestor; but Blackstone applies the word to one who kills his child. A matricide is the killer or murderer of a mother; and a sororicide is the killer or murderer of a sister. A regicide is a king-killer.

CIVILIAN.—It is said that the British soldier came by his nickname, "Tommy Atkins," as follows: Some forty years ago the military authorities, in order to secure uniformity of practice, found it necessary to issue specimens of the mode of filling up army forms; the clerk at the War Office selected for this duty adopted as the soldier's name the cognomen "Thomas Atkins;" and this name has ever since appeared at the head of specimen army forms; hence the nickname "Tommy Atkins."

M. D. P.—The tamarind is the fruit of a large tree which grows wild in various parts of Africa and Asia, but which is now cultivated in the West Indies and in South America. The fruit is a pod, five or six inches long and as thick as a man's finger, containing a row of seeds which are surrounded by a sour juicy pulp. In the West Indies when the pods are ripe they are picked and the fruit shelled out, packed into casks, and covered with boiling sirup. In the East Indies tamarinds are put up without sirup. A cooling acid drink is made from them by steeping them in water. It is often given to persons sick with fevers.

M. J.—The Greeks had far higher literary and artistic gifts than any other race that has appeared in the world. In art they stand supreme; in literature they have furnished masterpieces and rules for all time; in architecture they brought their own style to perfection. Of course this does not necessarily mean that what is left of Greek art and literature is worth all that exists of art and literature besides, because all other races for two thousand years have been pupils, directly or indirectly, of the Greeks in all that pertains to beauty, and have embodied much of what Greece had to teach in their own productions, and because there are fields which did not attract the Greek mind, and experiences of which the Greek knew nothing.

M. B.—It is said that certain Eastern nations have a fanciful belief that each month of the year is under the influence of a precious stone or gem, which influence affects the destiny of a person born during that particular month. Hence the custom among friends and lovers to make presents of these natal gems, the significations of which are given in detail as follows: January, garnet, constancy and fidelity; February, amethyst, sincerity; March, bloodstone, courage and presence of mind; April, diamond, innocence; May, emerald, success in love; June, agate, health and long life; July, coral, contented mind; August, sardonyx, conjugal felicity; September, chrysolite, antidote against madness; October, opal, hope; November, topaz, fidelity; December, turquois, prosperity.

IGNORAMUS.—We have often been asked a question similar to that which you put, namely, "Where can I obtain a list of educational books specially suitable for self-education?" The letter in which you ask this question is well and carefully written. The difficulty of answering a question of this kind is that we have no guide to the exact object of the person who wishes for self-education. Three stages of lack of education may be distinguished. First, those who have not had an ordinary elementary education, and cannot read, write, or cipher readily, but need the kind of teaching gained in an evening continuation school. What such people require is a set of school books and a little personal direction from some teacher. Each of the educational publishing firms issues a set of schoolbooks useful for this purpose. Any good bookseller will have a set of the works of one or more of these firms in stock, and you can get an arithmetic, grammar, and reading-book without difficulty that will serve your purpose. But that, we imagine, is hardly what you require. A second stage in lack of education, after people have mastered the elements, as you have, is a deficiency in the fluent use of their education—they cannot write with sufficient rapidity and ease and command of words. This fluency comes by such careful reading and practice in writing as it is within the power of every one. A third stage in the lack of education is that in which men or women feel that, though they are sufficiently well acquainted with and masters of the rudiments of learning, they have yet to acquire that general knowledge which provides material for interesting talk, and that they are wanting in the practice that gives ease in society. No set of books can be mentioned that will provide this mental cultivation. It must come gradually, through intelligent reading and talk and observation.

## RECONCILIATION.

BY G. H. B.

Pain and tears, tears and pain,
Hot words said, conn'd o'er again;
Night and day, day and night,
Yearning eyes seem aye in sight;
You loved me so, not long ago,
Now, you love me never;
Your piteous cry at parting nigh,
The bitterness of our "good-bye"
Will haunt me, hurt me, till I die,
For ever, Love! for ever!

Sing and laugh, laugh and sing,
Gladness glints o'er everything,
Night and day, day and night,
Hot words said, forgotten quite;
Sweetheart! I know you loved me so,
No scorn, your love could sever;
Past is pride, whate'er betide,
Leaving love, by trouble tried,
You and I, still side by side,
For ever, Love! for ever!

## In the Old Days.

BY F. M.

"Yes, sir, as you may suppose, I've met with some queer experiences and seen a good deal of the ups and downs of people's lives since I was first taken on at the Theatre Royal Salcott. A stage door-keeper may learn a sight of things about those that pass in and out, even without making it his business to watch them too closely. I've had a hand in more than one bit of romance in real life too, I can tell you, and you may believe it or not, as much tragedy and comedy have been played before my eyes down here as ever trotted or stalked across the stage up yonder, that I'll vouch for.

"I sit sometimes thinking over things until I am almost tempted to try and jot some of them down, but then I'm not much of a hand with a pen, you see, sir, so it comes to nothing. You were asking me just now about swells as get stage-struck and so on. Lor' bless you, we've had scores of them here at different times—baronets and earls and such like; some of them in disguise, it is true, but not all. Mr. Tamplin has been bribed over and over gain to let them play leading parts, but the most of them don't stick to it long. The boss is always extra hard on them at rehearsals, and he puts them through such stiff training and bullies them so much they are generally thankful enough to clear out. Yes, as I said just now, heaps of gents have come and gone, but there is one thing that I remember happened some twenty years ago which was, I think, a most uncommon occurrence. We had a lady of rank playing a pantomime part, and what's more, I was the one that brought her here. You would like to hear all about her, you say, sir. Well, it's a longish yarn and will take the best part of an hour to tell, but I don't suppose we shall be disturbed. If you will just make yourself cozy by the stove, for they won't be coming to dress for quite that time, I'll shut the door; being all glass I can easily see if any one comes along. I have to keep a pretty sharp look-out, for our boss will not have a lot of loafers hanging about the wings. There, now we are quite snug-like; so here's for the story. I won't mention real names, except Mr. Tamplin's and my own, and then no harm can come of it. I am afraid I must begin by talking about myself, if you will excuse me, sir. I daresay you noticed that I go very lame; that is through an accident I had with one of the springs in the harlequin scene when I was comparatively a young man. I used in those days to be stage carpenter, engineer and what not, until through another man's carelessness I nearly lost my leg and got so knocked about that I have never been able to do a day's hard work since. When I came out of hospital I was at my wits' end to know what I should do to get my living, until Mr. Tamplin came to see me and offered me this post, which I was very grateful for, you may be sure, though it was not so much good money as I had been earning. However, my wife was a thrifty woman, took lodgers, and did a bit of washing besides, so we managed to rub along between us. About a year after I settled down here she did her best to get me out of this, though; she took to attending some meetings held by a peculiar sect of people whose views were very narrow, and in the end she joined them. She was always a very good woman, was my wife, but a trifle hard, you know, sir, and she took it into her head that it was a terrible thing that one of the 'chosen,' as they called themselves, should have a husband that made his money in such a wicked place as a theatre. She argued and she prayed and she worried, but I would not give in. I said I must help to get bread for the children (there were six of them) somehow, that there was little enough I could do and that here I meant to stick, and so at last she agreed to drop the matter on condition that I never mentioned the place to her, nor let the youngsters come here.

"As I said before, sir, we took lodgers, and though we lived in a poor part of the town, we would have none but those we believed to be quite respectable, at any rate. We were pretty fortunate, and very rarely indeed did we have to keep the landlord waiting for his rent.

"One night, early in the December of '74, there came a knock at our door rather late, and as, for a wonder, I was at home—having had a night off—I answered it. There, standing on the steps, was a tall, slim girl, with something close-folded in her arms.

"'Are you Mr. Wyvel?' she asked in a rich voice, which somehow seemed to appeal to me.

"'Yes, miss! Can I do anything for you?' I said.

"'I was told that you had a room to let; if so, will you take in a sick man?' was her reply, a little tremor running through her words.

"'Room, miss? We've only an attic. Step inside, please, and I'll call my wife,' I said, opening the door wider.

"'No, no!' she answered impetuously. 'I cannot come in; I have left my husband on the other side of the street and must go back to him. An attic would do; we are very poor, but I could pay you a week's rent in advance if you wish it; I will come back for your answer in a minute or two,' saying which she disappeared.

"I went down and consulted Martha. 'She's a lady, every inch of it,' I said, 'but so young. I don't think she can be more than twenty, and she has a child wrapped up in her cloak, I believe.'

"My wife stood rigid for a moment or two, gazing into space and looking as though she were under the influence of some spell, a way with her when turning over anything in her mind.

"'We must take the sick man in,' she said, at length, much to my relief, and accordingly we went upstairs and opened the front door again. There was no one there, only on the step there lay a small bundle. I stooped down to examine it. 'Why! it's a baby—a boy,' I said. 'We've been played a nice trick, Martha,' I was about to add, when I heard a voice—the same rich, vibrating voice which had stirred me so before—calling for help from the other side of the way. Handing the child to my wife, I limped across as quickly as I could and found the young lady doing her best to sustain the weight of a man who was evidently in a state of collapse. There was a gas lamp hard by, and by the light of it I could see he was young and gentleman-like, but so ghastly pale that I almost doubted if he wasn't going to die there and then.

"I put my arm round him, but not being of much account in the matter of strength myself, I began to wonder how we were going to get him into the house, when the question was solved by my wife, who, having given the boy into one of the children's care, came over to see what she could do. Being strong-limbed and cool-headed, with her assistance we soon got the poor fellow indoors and upstairs. I shall never forget the look of dismay which came into the young lady's face as she glanced round the empty room, which, as I had told her, was nothing but an attic. I made a kind of apology for it, and said that at any rate it was dry and rain-proof.

"'Oh! it was not that I was thinking of,' she replied; 'it was about furniture; I have no money to buy any.' My wife had fetched a chair from somewhere for the sick man, whose breathing came in short gasps; otherwise the room was perfectly bare. Furniture! I had never given it a thought, but Martha, who was down on her knees trying to coax a fire to burn in the damp grate, had, it seems. 'The lady was quite welcome to the use of a few things out of Nobbs' room till they could turn round a bit,' she said.

"Nobbs was our first-floor lodger, a young man working on the railway; but he was away just now, gone home to bury his father, who had died worth a bit of money, so we expected he'd be some time settling matters. We were not very long in fixing up a bed for poor Mr. Somerset, as we will call him, from which he did not rise for many days, a severe attack of inflammation of the lungs bringing him near death's door. My wife helped all she could with the nursing, and although I says it that shouldn't, was very good to them in her way, whilst from the very first there was positively nothing that I would not have done for the lady. It was not only that she was beautiful, for she was that in a regal kind of way—tall, as I have said before, sir, with large, soft brown eyes, and hair for all that it looked so dark, had a warm coppery tinge in it; a clear-cut nose and a proud, sensitive mouth she had, too. No, it was not only her good looks, it was that she was so patient and brave and so devoted to her husband and child, so gentle to us all that made me think so much of her. The boy was very like her, with the same colored eyes and hair; hardly a look of his father about him—he being very fair, you see, sir—and with the same winning way as she had. He very soon became the pet and plaything of the house, and him and me were fast friends; he christened me 'Wobble,' and would crow with delight when he saw me, and would clamber up into my arms and pull my beard with his little fat, chubby hands. A bonny child; no wonder that his mother thought so much of him. Poor thing! What a struggle she had, though at first they paid the rent regular enough. She painted a bit, and I managed to sell a few of her pictures and fancy articles for a trifle; but I knew well their small stock of money was fast going. You see, the sick man needed so much nourishment, sir. Every penny she could spare went in buying dainties for him, whilst she, I was sure, did not really have enough to eat. Fortunately, Nobbs did not come back for Christmas, so we were able to let them still use our furniture, but I could not help wondering how it would all end.

"One morning, the beginning of the new year, Martha told me that the Somersets had paid no rent for the last three weeks. I asked her if we could not afford to wait, for I knew things were going very hard with them, but she shook her head gloomily. The winter was a very bitter one; food was dear and work was scarce. A man and his wife who had lived with us for years had gone away, owing us a small sum, so we had two rooms on our hands. 'I must go and tell her she must let me have a little money by to-morrow,' she said, which she accordingly did.

"It had become a habit with me always to go to the Somersets' room before starting for the theatre to know if there was anything that I could do for the lady, so after awhile I went and knocked at their door and was bidden to come in. Mrs. Somerset was sitting in front of the fire, and I could see at a glance she had been crying. The youngster would have come toddling across the room to me, but his mother raised a warning hand, at the same time glancing anxiously towards the bed where the sick man lay in an uneasy doze.

"'I am glad you have come up, Mr. Wyvel; I want you to do me a favor,' she said, her voice trembling a little as she spoke. 'Will you take that to the same shop as you did the other things, please, and get as much as you can on it?' and she placed a small parcel in my hands, then turned away from me as though she were afraid of being tempted to demand it back again. 'Anything else, ma'am?' I asked.

"'No, thank you, I think not. I have been trying to paint, but have used up all my most important colors, and you got so very little for the last pictures I did. Ah! Mr. Wyvel, if only you could tell me of something by which I might earn a little money,' she said, with tears in her voice.

"This was not the first time she had appealed to me; I would have given something to have been able to help her. But, Lor' bless you, sir! she had no knowledge of anything useful. She had never soiled her finger-tips till this trouble had come upon her, and besides, she could not be away from her sick husband for any length of time. I could only shake my head sorrowfully and leave her. Her eyes followed me to the door, and as I reached it she came a step or two towards me, and held out her hands a second, then clasping them tightly together, she turned away and sat down in the chair again. Poor soul! I could understand it all when, a little later on, the pawnbroker opening the packet, out tumbled her wedding ring. She gave my wife most of the money I handed her. After that I managed to bring some mending home from the theatre for her to do, but they paid next to nothing for it. Things went on much about the same for another week or so, when one morning we heard from Nobbs; he was coming back in a couple of days, he said.

"'That settles the matter,' said my wife; 'the Somersets 'ull have to go.'

"'But you surely can't turn that sick man out of doors,' I said, looking aghast at her.

"'No; I shan't exactly do that. I'm going to apply to the elders for tickets for the Salcott Hospital, where he'll have to go as in-patient. And Mrs. Somerset and her boy must get a lodging elsewhere. I cannot help saying I shall be glad to get rid of them. It's been on my mind for some time past they must have disgraced themselves in some way or they wouldn't be without a friend in the world, surely.'

"'Disgraced themselves! Yes, so they have in the eyes of their friends, I expect. Made a runaway match, I believe. I'd stake my life on it, though, Mrs. Somerset's as good and true a woman as ever trod in shoe leather. But she's very proud—too proud to ask a favor of those who have cast her off, I know,' I said.

"'Ah! men all go for a pretty face and trim figure,' my wife remarked contemptuously; 'if she'were plainer, you'd not think so much of her.'

"'Come, Martha! have a little mercy,' I said, trying to coax her. 'Can't we manage to scrape a few things together for them? Mrs. Somerset says that her husband can command a good appointment if only he can get well, and that they will pay us all back, with interest.'

"'Says!' remarked my wife, scornfully. 'No, it's no use talking, Wyvel; my mind's made up; I can't afford to lose Nobbs and I'm not a-going to sacrifice my own flesh and blood for strangers. There's two of the poor boys wanting shoes, and Jane needs a warm petticoat; she's but poorly clad, and her with a hacking cough, too. Surely, as the father of a family, your first thought should be for them.'

"At that I had to hold my tongue, sir. My wife sometimes reproached me for not being able to do better for her and the children. She always spoke of my accident as a judgment on the wicked line of life I had taken up. I don't think I've mentioned before that the pantomime, 'Dick Whittington,' was running most successfully at the theatre. Mr. Tamplin had been very fortunate in getting together an exceptionally clever lot of artistes, and so far not a hitch had occurred in the working of things. The afternoon of the day my wife and I had talked it out about the Somersets, Mr. Tamplin came to me in trouble.

"'Wyvel,' he said, 'Miss Freeman's taken ill and can't play to-night, and I don't see how I am going to manage, unless you can tell me where I can get hold of a girl that can sing.' Miss Freeman was playing Alice, and was the life of the piece.

"'Hadn't she an under-study, sir,' I questioned.

"'Yes, the Fairy Queen, you know; but I don't want to cut her three songs, and there's not another girl in the troupe equal to a solo,' was his reply.

"Suddenly a wild idea came into my head. 'Could you spare me for half an hour, sir? I think I might be able to find someone to fill up the gap,' was my answer.

"'Spare you? Certainly; be as quick as possible, though, and take a cab if necessary. Come to my room when you return,' saying which he left me.

"I went straight home and met my wife just coming out of the house. She asked if anything were amiss, to which I replied that there was not, and she passed on. Then a thought struck her and she came back. 'I have told her,' she said, jerking her thumb in the direction of the staircase, and I knew she had been speaking her mind to poor Mrs. Somerset. I went up to the attic and knocked at the door, and a low voice said 'Come in.' The sick man had made very little progress, though the doctor said he had taken a turn; most of his time he was apparently unconscious of what was going on around him. Mrs. Somerset was standing by the fire, the flickering flames of which lighted up her white face, whilst a look of dull, dead misery filled her beautiful eyes. The boy was at her feet, playing with some bits of toys our children had given him. Poor little chap! Even he seemed conscious of the heavy burden his mother was bearing so patiently, in a dim kind of way. He just looked up and smiled sadly when he

caught sight of me, and it sort of went to my heart when I thought of the noisy greeting he had use to give me.

"'Excuse me, ma'am, disturbing you at this time of the day, but I have something I want very much to say to you, and yet I don't know quite how to put it,' I began.

"'You are referring to what your wife has been saying to me, Wyvel,' she quickly replied. 'Please do not let it trouble you; she is perfectly justified in the course she has taken.' As she finished speaking the sick man moved uneasily and called her by name. In an instant she was by his side, bending over him with loving care.

"'Beatrice, did some one say just now that you were to send me away amongst strangers, to a hospital?' he asked.

"'You have been dreaming, dear, I expect. What put such a fancy into your head?'

"'I thought some one said so in this room just now. Do not let them part us, wife, if you can help it; we may not have long to be together,' was his reply.

"'Why, Val, you are getting better; the doctor says so, therefore you must not talk so despondently,' and she smoothed his pillows and kissed him tenderly, whereupon he turned round and was soon dozing again.

"'Oh, Mr. Wyvel, if I had only been brought up to do something sensible!' she said, the tears running down her cheeks. 'You heard what my husband said. It was very kind of your wife to get those tickets,' she went on, pointing to some papers which lay on the bed, 'but I cannot use them. How I have prayed that I might find something to do; any honest work I would take at this present moment, however menial it might be.'

"'I came home purposely to let you know I have heard of something, ma'am, but maybe you won't like it,' I put in. Then I told her about the vacancy at the theatre, and first of all she seemed quite horrified at the idea.

"'Must I decide at once, Wyvel?' she questioned.

"'Something very like it, I'm afraid. I promised not to be gone more than half an hour, and that's nearly up, I reckon.'

"'What makes you think I can sing?' she asked, as if to gain time.

"'Well, ma'am, if you will excuse me saying so, your voice is all music,' I said. And so it was, sir. You know from the very first it laid hold of me.

"She smiled sadly at my little compliment, then sank down in her chair, apparently lost in thought. I did not disturb her; I could not have done if my very life depended on it, for I knew she was fighting a terrible battle, though she sat as motionless as though she were carved in marble.

"The fire burned low; the boy moved restlessly amongst his toys, glancing from time to time at his mother. At last it was his little voice that broke the silence.

"'Mammy! mammy! I's so hungry, weally!' he said, stretching up his hands to her.

"'Hungry, are you, pet? Wait a little and mother will get you something to eat. Oh, my sweet! I must do this thing that is so hateful to me for father's sake and yours,' saying which she caught him up in her arms and smothered him with kisses; then she turned and took down her poor threadbare cloak and hat and commenced to put them on, and I noticed the thin fingers trembled so that they could hardly do their work. Having made so much effort her courage seemed suddenly to fail, and I began to think after all that I had come on a fruitless errand, when the sick man, all unconsciously, turned the scale in my favor.

"'Not to the hospital, wife,' he murmured, 'you would not send me there?'

"'No, darling, never!' was her reply, and she stroked the hair back from his hot forehead. Her touch seemed healing. In two minutes he was asleep. Then she turned to me: 'I am ready, Wyvel; take me to Mr. Tamplin,' she said.

"So we started off together, not, however, before I sent up my little maid Jane to look after the boy. As we walked along Mrs. Somerset bit by bit mastered her feelings, and by the time we reached Mr. Tamplin's room she was quite calm.

"'Here's a lady who is willing to fill up the gap, sir, if you can come to terms,' I said by way of introduction. Mr. Tamplin thanked me, and began to ask questions. He was fearful that Mrs. Somerset would be seized with stage-fright when she told him she had had no experience, but she was not nervous naturally, she said. Then he asked her to sing to him, and she sat down at the small planette he had in his room and sang as only one here and there can.

"'That will do,' said Mr. Tamplin. 'There is only the question of money to be settled then. Say, would you be satisfied with a £5 a week, and sign an agreement to play the part to the close of the pantomime?' he queried.

"'I would sign anything within reason if you will pay me a week in advance,' was her answer, which nonplussed me rather.

"'And if I do not care to do so?' questioned our boss.

"'I shall go and sing elsewhere, if only in the street; I must have money. I have a sick husband and starving child at home,' she said, trying hard to speak in her ordinary tones, I could hear, but her voice would quaver a little. Well, sir, Mr. Tamplin accepted her terms, and she signed the paper he drew up, whereupon he handed her a five-pound note. Shall I ever forget how her beautiful face softened and glowed as she took it. It meant life, food, and a little comfort for the two creatures on whom she lavished such a wealth of love, and for the moment the sacrifice she was about to make—the price she would pay for that flimsy piece of paper, had no place in her thoughts whatever. Then Mr. Tamplin gave her her lines (she'd little enough to say) and promising her he would tell the prompter to help her all he could, he asked me to show her to the dressing-room, where she could look them over.

"'Just scribble a little note to my wife, ma'am, and say you've got an evening engagement, and won't be home till after eleven, and I'll manage that she has it,' I suggested, when she found she had no time to return home and make arrangements for her husband's comfort. She thanked me, and I egged me also to get her some change, which I did, and some of the money was sent home with the letter. Just as Mrs. Somerset had finished writing it there came a knock at the door, and the dresser entered, her arms laden with gauzy skirts and her hands cumbered with a pair of wings. My lady watched her breathlessly as she laid them out on the bench; then a sigh of relief escaped her. If the attire was airy it was at least feminine. In her intense anxiety to help her loved ones, she had entirely forgotten to make any inquiries as to the get-up.

"Well, sir, I must hurry on with my tale, or you will be getting weary. Mrs. Somerset, or rather Miss Frome, as she was called on the bills, was a success. Her beautiful voice attracted attention from the first, and soon became the talk of the town, as Mr. Tamplin had foreseen it would, or he sure he would never have engaged a novice at such terms right off the reel like that; but when he did it he knew Miss Freeman would not be back again, for she was down with typhoid fever, it afterwards came out. As to my dear lady, as I had got to christen her, she was full of gratitude to me for my share in the matter, but begged me, with tears in her eyes, to tell no one of the transaction. You may be sure that I was discreet, and for more reasons than one. Had my wife got an inkling as to how Mrs. Somerset spent her evenings, they would not have been allowed to remain another night under our roof; besides, from certain observations I made, I was quite sure that there were those from whom Mrs. Somerset was anxious to hide her identity, for she always wore a thick veil both coming and going from the theatre, whilst on the stage she fairly disguised herself. 'Never answer any questions about me; never give my address to a living soul, my good Wyvel,' she said to me as we walked home together after her first appearance. I told her I would not, and I kept my word, but no promise I ever made gave me more trouble, I can assure you, sir; though for a time all things went well. Although always spoken of as the silent Miss Frome, Mrs. Somerset soon became a favorite with the girls, she was so gentle and unassuming, so grateful for any little kindness shown her, that even the roughest of them seemed influenced by her goodness. Mr. Tamplin was more than delighted with her. 'She is a draw,' he said to me one day. 'Every one speaks of her with admiration. By-the-bye, Wyvel, there is an old fellow, who looks no end of a swell, has booked a box for the week, and after watching him from the wings last night, I have come to the conclusion that it is Miss Frome who is the attraction. If he should come to you with inquiries, give him no quarter. She shall not be molested if we can help it. How is her husband?' 'Better, sir, much better,' I was able to answer, for the young fellow had picked up wonderfully since things had been going easier with them. Mrs. Somerset had not only paid off her debt to us, but she had also been enabled to get together some pretty furniture, and provide her husband with many little luxuries that such as us would never think about. I began to congratulate myself on my part in the matter, and spent my time building big air-castles, in which Mrs. Somerset always appeared as a prima donna rolling in money and sharing it (as I knew she would do, for she was of a very generous nature) with those who had stood by her in her need. Suddenly my castle fell in ruins without a moment's warning. The very next night after Mr. Tamplin had been talking to me about her, I stole up into the wings to hear Miss Frome's last song. Contrary to her usual custom she stepped forward, quite close to the foot-lights, and glancing round the house, her eye finally rested on the stage-box, where sat an old man alone, and somewhat in the shadow of the curtain. As she caught sight of him, I noticed she shuddered slightly and a look of fear stole across her face.

"I was afraid she was going to break down, but in an instant she recovered herself, and sang her song like a lark on the wing; but that finished, she turned and groped her way off the stage as though she could not see. Perhaps the limelight had dazed her. Anyhow, she walked a few steps, then stumbled and pitched heavily forward, striking her head against the handle of a windlass used in the working of the transformation scenery.

"She almost fell into my arms, quite insensible, with a big wound gaping on her left temple. I carried her up to the dressing-room, and with the help of the attendant, we brought her round, bound up the poor head, and soothed her nerves with a dose of sal volatile.

"'Take me home, Wyvel,' was her cry as soon as she could speak. So I went and fetched a cab and told the man to wait for us at the big gates at the back of the stage where they cart the scenery in and out, for I thought perhaps the other exits would be watched. She thought so too, for she seemed quite afraid to leave the theatre until I told her the coast was clear. She made me dismiss the cab two streets off our own too, but it was as much as she could do to crawl the rest of the way.

"The next day Mr. Tamplin was once more minus a Fairy Goodwill. Poor Mrs. Somerset was not likely to appear in pantomime again very soon. The blow had gone hard with her, fever set in, and she lay insensible and hovering between life and death for nearly a fortnight; but it was not the blow only that she was suffering from, and times and the terrible strain of doing a thing so distasteful to her in every way had really done the mischief. Fortunately she had a little money put by, otherwise they would have been in a sad plight again, for Mr. Somerset, for all that he nursed his wife devotedly, was still suffering very much from weakness. In her delirium the latter very soon revealed her carefully guarded secret, and I shall never forget the look on her husband's face when he mentioned it to me. I began to make excuses, for of course, I expected he would blame me for my part in the matter but he never said a word of reproach. 'You did what you could for us, Wyvel,' he remarked. 'It was like my brave, true-hearted wife to utter;' forget herself for our sakes. Perhaps only I, who knows her so well, can realize what the effort cost her.' Then he told me all about himself and misfortunes. It was a common tale enough at the outset. The son of a clergyman of good family, he was told from his earliest childhood he would be expected to follow in his father's footsteps, as there was a fat living in the gift of a near relative, and as is so often the case, he rebelled against the idea from the first. He was born with a craze for pictures and the making of them; and drew figures in his Latin grammar and sketches in all his exercises books, till he drove his tutors nearly silly. On the eve of his going to college he poured out his heart to his father and implored him to be allowed to follow up what he so dearly loved, but the old man was just horrified at the idea; they came to high words, and a breach was made between them that was never really bridged. After spending nearly two years at Oxford, the young man happened to come across an artist of some note, to whom he told all his longings and ambitions, and having a little money of his own his new friend was not long in persuading him to follow his natural bent and leave behind him forever the life that was so hateful to him. He started for Italy and not alone. A young lady whom he had been for some time desperately in love with, and whose people were doing their very best to make marry a man she hated, chose to share his good or ill fortune, as the case might be, with him, rather than be dragged into a loveless match. For a time things went well enough. Besides studying, Mr. Somerset spent a lot of time in copying pictures, with a fair measure of success, and a few pupils brought in a little grist to the mill. Then baby came; Mrs. Somerset was very ill for some time after his birth and their troubles began in real earnest. Mr. Somerset worked like a nigger, painting all day and etching at night, selling his pictures for anything he could get for them. So closely did he apply himself that at times his right hand and wrist grew rigid, and cramping pains seized it. But he took no heed of the warning until one day the fingers refused to grasp brush or pencil; the hand was useless!

"He went at once to a clever surgeon, who shook his head gravely as he made the examination. One of the principal ligaments had been worn to a thread and had given way; nothing whatever could be done for it. 'You have worked it too hard and not taken a proper amount of nutriment to feed the tissues of the body,' was his way of putting it, and it fell on Mr. Somerset like a thunder clap, as you may say, sir. At first he refused to believe it, but a second and a third doctor told him the same, after which a kind of despair took possession of him, and when he heard that his father had died suddenly and cut him off with a shilling, as the saying is, he was too downhearted already to feel the blow at first. There was nothing left for them to do but make their way home and throw themselves on the mercy of Mrs. Somerset's relations, who were very wealthy. Accordingly, plucking up the spirit she was so full of, Mrs. Somerset took matters in her own hands, sold off all they possessed and started for home, though they had to make several halts as Mr. Somerset's health began to fail. Consequently their small stock of money rapidly grew less, and soon after reaching home, they found themselves obliged to pocket their pride and appeal to Mrs. Somerset's nearest relative (I forgot to mention that she was an orphan) for the help they so sorely needed; the only result was a cruel, cutting note of refusal and a signification that all further letters from them would be returned unread. Finally, an artist friend had started them off to Salcott, with letters of introduction to the committee of the Art School, where was a vacancy for a head master; but here, as I have told you, sir, Mr. Somerset again broke down. As for my dear lady, she was suffering from a kind of brain fever and raving a good deal, talking of much that had happened before her marriage, and crying out for forgiveness or help continually. Just then I was going through a pretty rough time of it and the gray-headed gentleman that Mr. Tamplin had spotted became the very bane of my existence. The very morning after Mrs. Somerset's mishap he put in an appearance here, and cross-questioned me until my hair almost stood on end. He was just mad to get her address, and took no trouble to disguise the fact; but I was determined nothing should drag it out of me, so I stood my ground, fencing at every question, thinking I was doing my sweet lady service and little dreaming that all the time I was really standing in her light. Again and again he came, each time more irate than the last, whilst I, for my part, grew more obstinately determined to keep my secret; but when at length two whole days went by without his turning up I began to hope I had worn out his patience, of which he possessed none too much.

"Then came a terrible night when Mrs. Somerset lay in a heavy stupor, which the doctor said foretokened the crisis; from it she might awake to life and reason or sink out of it gradually. During all her illness the boy had slept in our room, and when I had learned the state of things I stepped upstairs and took a look at him as he lay asleep in his cot. I remember a bit of a queer feeling came over me as I realized that before the morning dawned he might be motherless. He was a bonny boy, so the threshold. In a moment all the sunny-tempered and never gave any trouble, except that now and again he

would cry for his mammy. He quite wound himself round my heart, and when they went away it was many a day before I got over the miss of him.

"Of course we none of us went to bed, but we might have done for the matter of that, for no change came in the state of the patient. The morning found us all looking haggard and worn with the long watch, but we had done everything. I was too anxious to leave the house, so I sent a message to Mr. Tamplin asking for a few hours off; then I sat down by the kitchen fire, glum enough and helpless, as men usually are at such times. Suddenly a loud rat-tat-tat roused me from a little doze into which I had fallen, and to save my wife the trouble (for she had more than her fair share of running about in those days) I went to the door. There stood my gray-headed old tormentor, and I knew by the expression on his face that my game was up; besides, a cab was waiting outside, and at a glance I recognized the man that brought us home the night of the accident. I learned afterwards that he lived in our street and had often seen Mrs. Somerset coming and going with me.

"'You see I have tracked you down at last,' said the fiery old gentleman; 'it is no use beating about the bush any longer. Where is Miss Frome? If she is within, I demand to be taken to her at once; you are altogether going against the lady's interest in keeping us apart.' As he stood there, bristling with anger and ready to go to any extreme, I knew, I could not help in a measure admiring his fine aristocratic face and faultless get-up.

"'You will not see the lady to-day, sir, I feel sure; but step inside; I will call Mr. Somerset,' I said, and threw open the door of Nobbs' room. He entered it with a heavy frown on his face and stood stiff and erect, making our little dwelling look small and mean by his fine presence. Then he raised his hand as though to protest against something, but before he could speak I moved off and closed the door behind me.

"I must tell you that I never hinted to Mr. Somerset that any one had been inquiring for his wife at the theatre, knowing how anxious she was to keep her connection with it a strict secret. I thought it might worry him if he got to hear of it. However, now it must come out, so, sending one of the children to fetch him, for my movements were slow and noisy at the best, I waited anxiously at the foot of the stairs, gave him a few words of explanation and ushered him into the front room.

"'Lord Darminster!' I heard him exclaim, evidently very much taken aback. And so was I, you may be sure, so much so that I forgot to move away, and stood listening for what came next, in an ill-mannered way.

"'Where is Beatrice?' exclaimed the old earl, and without waiting to be answered, he followed up the question with a perfect storm of abuse leveled at poor Mr. Somerset's unlucky head. 'You scoundrel,' he went on, 'to allow your wife—my granddaughter—to turn pantomime actress, dragging her name and our fame in the mud; whilst you, I suppose, were following up your high aims and artistic aspirations in a garret!'

"'You had better choose your words more carefully if you want me to hold any further intercourse with you,' said Mr. Somerset, in cold, cutting tones that I had never heard him use before. 'I drive my wife to such a thing! You had far more to do with it than I had. Want, and sickness, and cruelty, drove her into strange company, Lord Darminster. Had you done your part by Beatrice she had never been where she is now.'

"'Where is she? Let me see her. I am willing to make some compromise to prevent such a thing occurring again,' said the old man, a little less fiercely.

"Then Mr. Somerset spoke. 'Certainly you shall see her at once, if you will.' I heard no more, for my wife called me upstairs. When I got there she had come back into the sick room, where I followed her.

"'See! she is getting restless,' she said, pointing to the bed; 'Mr. Somerset ought to be here, in case she comes to her senses.' I turned to go and fetch him, but met him and his visitor on the landing, proud look died out of the face of the latter as his eye rested on what was left of poor Mrs. Somerset. The white, wan features, the closely cropped head, the closed eyes, the thin worn frame outside the mere fact, even the dull appealed strongly to the man, stony-hearted though he was; how strongly was shown in the sudden deep lines of pain in every feature, the drops of perspiration which stood on his forehead. He would have approached the bed, but my wife waved him back; then he bowed his head to hide his feelings, and I knew that Mr. Somerset had dealt out no small amount of punishment in not mentioning his wife's illness during their short interview; evidently he had no mind to spare the man who might have saved them from so much trouble and misery. Suddenly my attention was attracted in another direction. My sweet lady showed signs of awaking from her trance or sleep, and Mr. Somerset hastened to the bedside, whilst Lord Darminster strode forward and bent eagerly over her pillow. Slowly the fringed lids stirred and quivered, then upraised themselves, whilst a tiny smile played about the mouth as Mrs. Somerset fixed her great eyes on her husband's face. 'Val, love,' was all she at first found strength to say, but we knew by that that reason had once more returned. Then her glance wandered from one to another of us, and finally settled on Lord Darminster. 'You here, too, grandpapa? You have come to say you forgive me before I die,' she murmured, dreamily. The old man could not speak, but he stooped down and kissed her forehead. 'Be good to my boy,' she pleaded; then turned to her husband again.

"My wife put in her spoke in a practical kind of way. 'Who says you're dying, ma'am?' she said brusquely. 'Why, you're just getting better; you're to drink this and turn over and go to sleep again and next time you wake you'll feel a deal stronger;' and she measured out a draught from a medicine bottle and administered it to the poor creature, and sure enough in a very few minutes she was in dreamland.

"Well, sir, there is little more to tell you. Mrs. Somerset's money troubles were overcome at last, Lord Darminster settling a comfortable income upon them. His hard old heart after all had a soft place in it, which he found out for himself when he thought his grandchild lay dying. Of course she had appealed to him before they went abroad for forgiveness, but had failed to obtain it, it seems; then when that extra cruel letter had come from him it so stung her husband's pride that he had extracted a promise there and then from her that she would never write to him again. Still she lived in hopes that he would soften in time, until she caught sight of him that night in the theatre and knew by the expression on his face that he recognized her, and that he was angrier than ever he had been with her before. It was an odd chance that brought them all to Salcott. Mr. Somerset had traveled thither, as you've heard, to see about an appointment at the Art School, but fell ill before applying for it—indeed, on the very night of their arrival. Lord Darminster came down about a small property he had been instructed to buy for a friend, and had dropped into the theatre just to kill time. He was terribly upset, of course, at seeing his granddaughter on the boards, and, after a hard struggle, decided to seek her out and offer her a small pittance, provided she agreed to certain conditions, which you may be sure were anything but easy ones. However, Mr. Somerset's prompt action in bringing the old man quite unprepared into his wife's sick chamber altered all that, you see, sir. And since then my sweet lady has come into a pile of money, with which, as I knew she would, she does no end of good. Do I ever see her now? Lor' bless you, yes, sir. My maid Jane is with her and waits on the little misses, and I go to see them sometimes. There are three of them, but none so bonny as their mother, although they've her pretty manners. She never had but the one boy, who has grown a fine fellow and is working up for the army. He came to see me last week and brought the news of some picture of his father's about which they're making no end of a fuss. Does he paint now, did you say, sir? Oh, yes, with his left hand. What was I talking about? Oh, the first-born. I said something to him about my sweet lady, and he told me that he had only lately learned of her stage experiences. She had told him herself. 'My mother is a grand woman, Wyvet!' he exclaimed, as his eye flashing proudly. 'I always knew she ought to be capable of wonderful things, but I never dreamed she could be so splendid as she is.' I'm certainly willing, I heard for the first time of what she had done in the old days for the sake of two."

## SMALLER AND SMALLER.

The smallest elephant is one from Sumatra, which we recently exhibited in Berlin. Three years old, it stands only 36 inches from the ground. It is a little over one yard in length, and weighs 168 pounds. The normal elephant weighs at the same age at least 3 tons. A pigmy race of camels exists in Persia which are only 25 inches in height and weigh but 50 pounds, while an ordinary camel is larger than most horses. The smallest bird's egg is that of the tiny Mexican humming bird, which is scarcely larger than a pin's head.

The smallest newspaper in the world is published in Guadalajara, in Mexico. The El Telegrafo, a weekly publication, is printed in eight columns, each 4½ inches long and 1½ inches wide, on thick manilla paper. Its staff includes an editor and director, an administrator, or business manager, a responsible man, or capitalist, and a printer, and it is issued every Sunday.

The smallest French conscript on record is Louis Bernadat, of Luret, in the department of the Allier, who was only 2 feet 4 inches in height. Little Bernadat came of age in 1883, and was in that year summoned to draw his conscription number out of the urn, like his fellows of the same age. When he appeared to answer to his name, it was thought that some child had been told to answer as a joke, but on looking more closely it was seen that he was a dwarf with a slight moustache. A gendarme had to lift him on to the table to enable him to draw his number.

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Cure for Corpulence.—The annexed bill of fare is that proposed by Professor Ebstein for an average case of corpulency, the invalid being supposed to be forty-one years of age, and having suffered from increasing stoutness for twenty-five years. The disease is supposed to be contracted by insufficient bodily exercise, a diet consisting of such things as are hurtful, among which are named all sweet dishes, and those containing much albumen, and those devoid of a sufficient quantity of fat. Breakfast—A large cup of black tea without milk or sugar; fifty grammes of white bread, or toasted brown bread with plenty of butter. Dinner—Soup (frequently, and with bone marrow), one hundred and twenty to one hundred and eighty grammes of meat, boiled or roasted, with fat gravy—fat meat being preferable; a small quantity of vegetables, particularly ligumi- with a pleased expression in them. nous, but also all kinds of cabbage. Turnips are excluded because of the sugar contained in them; potatoes are altogether excluded. After dinner some fresh fruit, when in season, as dessert; a salad or baked fruit without sugar. Two or three glasses of light wine. Soon after dinner a large cup of black tea, without milk or sugar. Supper—In winter regularly, in summer occasionally, a large cup of black tea without milk and sugar. An egg or some fat roast meat, or broth, sometimes fat ham, smoked or fresh fish, about thirty grammes of white bread, with plenty of butter, and occasionally a small quantity of cheese and some fresh fruit.

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Giving Pleasure to Others. Some have the musician's gift and others that of the painter; some are good story-tellers, and others have interesting experiences to relate or valuable information to give. All such are able to bestow unfeigned delight upon appreciable listeners, if they do not trespass too long upon their time and attention. The simple desire to confer this pleasure upon those who require it, joined with ordinary tact and observation, will generally guide the possessor aright as to the time he thus engrosses, but, when the craving for triumph or applause is uppermost, it is often prolonged to the disappointment of some who might also have contributed, and to the weariness of many who would have preferred a change in the entertainment. We have all seen a gaiety and exacting musician who, while monopolizing the instrument, has stopped him a dozen [illegible] (Some [illegible] among the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

# Our Young Folks.

## SIGNOR GOBBO.

BY P. G.

Bambino was a little Italian boy with dark curly hair, with black eyes which sparkled like two little coals on fire and with red cheeks like a Normandy pippin. His real name was Tommasino, which means "little Thomas," but his mother called him Bambino, which means "baby boy." The first thing Bambino could remember was lying in a little wooden box which was strapped to the handles of a piano-organ. This was his cradle in which he used to go to sleep while his mother turned the handle of the piano-organ, which played all sorts of lively tunes. Bambino's nursery was a great London street and, instead of a pretty lullaby sung by a nurse, he was lulled to sleep by the loud tunes of the organ, which shook his little box by the clatter of horses and carts, the cracking of whips, the shouts of men, and all the din and tumult which fills a busy street. But Bambino was used to all this noise and slept soundly through it all. At the end of every tune his mother bent over the little wooden cradle and kissed him, and when he opened his eyes she would smile and say:

"How is my little Bambino now?"

Bambino thought there was nothing in the world so beautiful as his mother. The people in the streets, the cabs and the carts were ugly and noisy, but his mother was like a ray of bright sunshine or like a beautiful flower in the dirty London street.

She wore a clean white blouse and a bright red skirt, and on her head was pinned a little scarlet cloth which matched the roses in her cheeks. She had beautiful brown eyes, and when she spoke her voice was soft and low like music. Two little golden rings glistened in her ears, and on her breast was a little silver cross. Bambino called her "Mamita," which means "little mother," and he loved her better than anything in the world.

When Bambino was eight years old Mamita bought him a concertina and taught him to play some of the songs that she sang to him when he was a baby. He soon played them so well that the passers-by used to stop and listen, and when he had finished they heaped their hands and cried "Bravo!" and gave him pennies. Bambino was as happy as the day is long when he went out alone with his concertina and played to the passers-by, and he was as proud as a king when he carried a few pennies to take home to Mamita.

Mamita put all these pennies in a box, the box and said:

"When this box is full, Bambino, we must get a monkey."

Bambino clapped his hands for joy. How fine it would be to have a real live monkey to teach a few tricks and to play with it!

The little box took a long time to fill, but one day when Bambino came home his mother clapped her hands and cried:

"Come, Bambino, look at the money box."

In the middle of the room stood a large hamper, and something inside it was making a strange noise as if some lady were snoring. Bambino crept on board it on tiptoe and opened the lid of the basket in breathless excitement. Curled up in the straw with his head under his arm, lay a monkey, fast asleep, and snoring like an old man. Bambino burst into a merry laugh and capered for joy.

"What a beautiful monkey! What a splendid fellow!" he cried.

The noise woke up the monkey, and he sat up in the basket and growled.

Bambino stopped laughing and hid behind Mamita.

"Does he bite?" he said anxiously.

"No, no," said Mamita laughing. "He will not hurt you. See, he does not look. Come, Gobbo, salute!"

The monkey jumped out of the basket and put his hand to his forehead like a soldier saluting.

"Great!" cried Mamita.

The monkey put his hand to the other side of his head and saluted.

Bambino came nearer and patted the monkey, and it didn't growl. It didn't even look angry. It only looked very funny, and Bambino fell in love with it at once, and Bambino fell in love with it at once, and Mamita was as much pleased.

"Let me take him out!" he said coaxingly.

Mamita tied a string round Gobbo and fastened it round Bambino's waist.

"Now he cannot run away," she said.

Bambino put his concertina under his arm and made Gobbo jump on his shoulder. Then he kissed Mamita and started out to earn some pennies. He felt very proud when he walked along the street with a little crowd of boys following him. It is not everyone who has a concertina and a real live monkey in a red coat. But he soon began to feel rather tired, for Gobbo was very heavy for a small boy like Bambino, especially when he jumped up and down on his shoulder or clambered on top of the concertina. When Bambino had come to a nice quiet street he thought he would stop and play a few tunes and make Gobbo do his tricks before some children who were looking out of a window. But Gobbo was of a different opinion from his master, and as soon as Bambino had put him down on the ground, he scampered off at a great pace, pulling Bambino after him. Bambino tried to stop, but he was afraid of dropping his concertina, and the monkey was very strong, and pulled him along in spite of himself. The people in the street stopped and laughed when they saw a small boy, with a concertina on his back, being tugged along by a big monkey in a red coat, and calling out:

"Stop, Gobbo, stop!"

But the mischievous rascal did not pay any attention to Bambino's shouts, and only scampered along faster, turning somersaults as he went.

Bambino followed, panting and puffing, tugging hard at the string, and shouting as loudly as he could. Presently they came to a big house with area railings. Gobbo jumped through the railings and sat on the sill of the kitchen window, grinning at Bambino and making strange noises.

The string with which Bambino was fastened to Gobbo was only just long enough to reach from the railings to the kitchen window, so that poor Bambino was pressed so tightly against the railings that he could hardly breathe. He thought he should be suffocated, and was just going to call for help, when the string broke and he fell back on his head with a crash.

Then Bambino burst into tears and wished that Mamita had never bought the monkey.

"You are a wicked Gobbo!" he cried. "I hate you!"

But Gobbo only grinned and chattered, and did not seem to mind whether Bambino hated him or not. Presently Bambino dried his tears and wondered how he could get hold of him again. What would Mamita say if he went home without him? He called to Gobbo and asked him to come home, but the monkey did not pay any attention. Bambino coaxed him, and scolded him, and promised him all sorts of things if he would be a good monkey and go home, but it was all in vain. Gobbo would not budge. Bambino was in despair, but at last he thought of his dinner which he had in his pocket. Perhaps he could tempt Gobbo with that. He took out the bread and meat and placed it in front of the area railings. His hopes were rewarded. No sooner did the greedy animal perceive the food than he jumped off the window sill, pushed through the railings, and began to swallow large mouthfuls of Bambino's dinner.

Bambino, feeling hungry himself, but afraid to touch some of the food Gobbo growled and showed his teeth so fiercely that he did not dare to do so. The greedy monkey soon gobbled up all Bambino's nice dinner, and when it had finished he jumped through the railings again and climbed up a water pipe which ran up the side of the house. Up, up he climbed until he got on to the roof, and then he scrambled along from house to house until presently he came to a little, little window which was open. To the horror of Bambino, who was running along in the street below, he disappeared inside.

Bambino was almost frantic with despair. He was tempted to run home and leave the monkey altogether, but he thought Mamita would be angry if Gobbo was lost. He went up the steps of the big house in which Gobbo had disappeared and rang the bell with trembling hands. A footman opened the door, and when he saw the little Italian boy he bade him go away.

"Please, I want my monkey," said Bambino.

The footman stared.

"What kind of monkey?" he said.

"Please, it jumped in at the kitchen window," said Bambino excitedly.

"Oh, golly!" said the footman. "If it has got into the nursery you'll catch it!"

Then he told Bambino to wipe his feet on the mat and to follow him upstairs. Up they went, flight after flight, until Bambino thought they were never going to stop, but at last the footman opened a door and they entered a room full of children.

"John, John!" shouted a little girl, rushing up to the footman. "A monkey has jumped in through the window, and we have put the cradle over him!"

"Oh, what fun!" shouted a lot of little children, dancing round a cradle, which was placed upside down on the top of the mischievous Gobbo, who sat underneath it, looking very frightened.

"We have caught a monkey! Hurrah!"

"Well, missy," said the footman, "the sooner you give it to this urchin the better. We don't want no monkeys here."

"Missy" looked at Bambino curiously.

"Does it belong to you?" she said.

"Yes," said Bambino shyly.

"Well," said the little girl, pulling some money from her pocket, "I will buy it from you. I'm tired of my doll, and I would much rather have a monkey."

"Yes," said a big boy in an Eton collar, "and I'm tired of teasing the cat. A monkey is much better fun."

"How much money have you got, Tom?" said the little girl.

The boy and girl put their week's allowance of pocket money together and Tom offering it asked: "Will you take that?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Bambino, who had never seen such a lot of money.

"Well, then, here it is," said the little girl, in a business-like way, "and now you can go."

"Well," said the footman, with a burst of laughter, "I shall be glad to know what nurse will say!"

"Nonsense!" said the little girl, angrily. "Nurse has nothing to do with it. Take the boy out, John, and leave us alone."

"Very well, miss," said the footman, with a smothered laugh. Then he took Bambino downstairs again and let him out of the house.

Bambino ran home as fast as his legs could carry him, and he flung himself into Manita's arms and burst into tears, and when he told her what terrible tricks the wicked monkey had played him, Mamita promised him that never again would she buy such a mischievous rascal to plague her little Bambino.

## PUSSY'S HOLIDAY.

BY S. C. W.

A large tabby cat sat by the nursery window and purred. Contentment filled her soul, for to-day was Tuesday, and that very afternoon had been fixed for the family, children and all, to leave town for a month's sojourn at the seaside.

"Ah!" said she, "what a happy time I shall have! Nobody to pull my tail, no one to pinch my ears, and nobody to maul me about and insist on my sitting on their knees."

"Yes, that's all very well," said a canary which swung in a cage overhead, "but how about food? I remember when they went away last year they left me in charge of the cook, and she forgot all about me till one of the neighbors saw me and reminded her; and this year will be worse than ever, for the cook is going away too."

"Oh, I think I can manage that," said Puss, and from force of habit she began licking her lips.

The canary shuddered and remained silent, for the thought struck him that if he and Puss were left shut up together and Puss became hungry, his life would soon be taken to satisfy her appetite. For though they were very good friends at the present time, when food was plentiful, he felt that he should not care to trust her under adverse circumstances.

Two o'clock came, and with it a cab, a cab which all but disappeared under the mountain of luggage piled on the top, but which yet maintained its equilibrium when it drove off with a little head sticking out of each window, and a baddy hand waving a grubby handkerchief to the caretaker, a hard-featured woman of uncertain age, who nevertheless relaxed a little at the sight of the happy smiling faces.

Puss sat sat very straight and stiff in her chair by the nursery window, and looked her last fond adieu exactly over her two front paws, for she was offended, more she was deeply hurt, for she, the one beautiful object in the house (so she told herself), had been forgotten; no one had waved to her, no one had taken the trouble to come up and bid her good-bye. She had been forgotten! Very well, then, she would forget them; and when they came back, if they were not very apologetic, she would cut them. Ah! yes, that thought was consoling; and how nice and quiet the house seemed after the bustle of the morning!

"Now," said she, "I will go and drink my milk, which I did not care to do with everybody tearing about after nothing. I might have got my tail trodden on, and if there is one thing I do dislike more than another, it is that."

Poor Puss! Her heart sank when she saw her milk had been forgotten; the saucer indeed stood in its accustomed place, but empty.

"No matter, I will complain to the caretaker," said she; "I am sure she will give me some at once."

But alas! as Puss descended the stairs she heard the key turn in the front door. The so-called caretaker had locked up the house and gone, her care being not the house, but the keys; so, after all, Puss was alone. Not even the canary was there; he had been sent across to a friendly neighbor who had promised to take charge of him. Another grievance for poor Puss; no one had offered to look after her.

At the end of a fortnight she began to be frightened. No one had come near the house, and mice seemed to be running short.

"I'll mew," said she; "that will bring some one." But it did not. A few of the passers-by would look up at the window where she sat, and say, "Pussy, Pussy," and pass on. "As if that did any good!" said she with a wag of the tail.

One day she saw coming down the road a young man, and she at once made up her mind to try her utmost with him.

"Miaow!" said she, as a beginning, but it had no effect.

"Miaow—ow—ow—ow!" she went on; and the young man half stopped as he caught sight of her, looked up and down the street to see that no one saw him stopping to speak to a cat, and finally said:

"Well, what's up with you, old lady?"

This was too much. "Old lady," indeed! What impertinence! And Puss forgot all about her hunger at the insulting words, and stalked majestically away, and the young man passed on out of sight.

Some days after that—how long she could not tell—Puss sat in one of the deserted rooms in a pitiable condition. She had had no mice for three days, and one would hardly have recognized in the thin, scraggy, gaunt-looking cat the sleek and handsome tabby of the past.

As she sat there wishing she could die a little more quickly, her attention was caught by a sound outside, a sound that had not been heard for many days, and which sent new hope to the heart of poor Puss. Yes, it was unmistakable—wheels first, then a key in the door, and peals of childish laughter, and little feet running here and there, the children all excitement to see the familiar old rooms once more after so long an absence. Then the door of the room where she lay was thrown open, and the youngest little girl ran in, only to stop short with amazement at the sight of the unfortunate animal.

"Oh, mother!" she cried; "do look at poor Pussy!"

"My dear child!" exclaimed her mother; "how careless of me! The poor thing must have been here all the time we were away. I must have forgotten to ask Harriet to take her away. Run and get her some milk."

How thankfully poor Puss lapped up that milk, I leave you to imagine; and next year when the family left for the seaside they took Puss with them.

She was once more the majestic-looking being of former days, but her chief delight was sitting on the knees of first one and then another of the children, and purring out her happiness to her old friend the canary.

—The mummy of one of the Thothmes some time ago excited the curiosity of antiquaries by an appearance similar to that of metal in the mouth. A further examination showed that the king had a set of artificial teeth, the plate being made of wood, and brass tacks or buttons serving the purpose of upper teeth.

## THE LAND OF YOUTH.

BY E. B.

There's an island set in the sea of Time
Where the South winds ever blow,
With laughter sweet and a faultless rhyme
Through the full-leaved woods they go;
And the sky of that land is always blue,
And nightingales ever sing
To the roses steeped in crystal dew,
And the rarest flowers spring.
There are treasures left in that wondrous isle,
There are tresses of hair and rings,
There are songs we knew and a maiden's smile,
And a harp with golden strings.

And we sometimes hear, through the breaker's roar
And the sea gull's angry screams,
A low sweet voice from that distant shore
That we often hear in dreams.

We have sailed afar over wind-swept seas
Since we left that fairy land,
And our keel, on the stormy Hebrides,
Has ploughed through the wreck-strewn sand,
We shall sail no more o'er the sea of Time
To the land where the roses grow,
With its treasure-troves and its cloudless clime
That we knew once long ago.

## ABOUT THE CHINESE.

All countries have their social fictions, the little "white lies" of society, and the Chinese are by no means an exception. In fact, they seem to have carried the art of "pious deceptions" to a stage of perfection that amazes Europeans. A late writer in a leading European publication relates a number of his personal experiences in China. Before speakin of these, he refers in an introductory way to several instances recorded in Chinese history which, he declares, teem with stories of bluff and deception, the one successful in these arts being held up by the historian as a model of wisdom. And yet nowhere in the world, we are assured, is honesty more admired than in China, and instances of unimpeachable integrity are by no means rare there. We infer, therefore, that the deception lauded by the Chinese historians is that practised by the Chinese upon foreigners, an inference that seems bore out by the illustrations recorded, some of which are as follows:

China's greatest military hero, the Emperor T'ang T'ai-tsung, feeling himself insecurely seated on the throne, bluffed a couple of Turkish Khans who were assisting his rivals, by riding almost unattended up to the Turkish lines and challenging the supreme Khan to personal combat. The Turks were so astonished that they could not speak, and, suspecting some trap, at once came to terms. If there was exceptional courage in this bluff, it probably was because the Emperor had Turkish blood in him. Another great general, finding himself short of arrows, conceived the idea of stowing a couple of enormous haystacks on flats, and drifting them down the river through the enemy's lines; the enemy, of course, thought there were men behind the hay, and when the flats had cleared the enemy's cantonments, over 2,000,000 arrows were picked out uninjured.

One of the most ingenious dodges I ever heard of was practised by a Chinese general upon our old friends the Turks, who at that time were massacring the Chinese instead of Armenians. The Chinaman had his forces safely posted on one side of a mountain, but it was absolutely essential to success to know by which routes the Turks would fetch the curve. He, therefore, put one hundred pigeons in two chests, inscribed each chest: 'Cursed be the dastard who opens this.' Of course, the foolish Turks slashed open the boxes, and thus marked with precision their exact positions and movements.

I remember one case where a salt junk and cargo had been wrongfully seized and sold. The Chinese took very high and mighty ground, and stoutly swore the junk lay a mile beyond foreign waters. At the last moment an irrefragable proof of this wrong accidentally turned up in the shape of the slipped anchor, and it was privately arranged with the salt commissioner, in order to 'save the viceroy's face,' that another junk of the same kind should be bought, filled with salt, and unofficially handed over to the foreign authorities, who, on their part, agreed to allow the viceroy's dispatch to stand, officially asserting the unjustifiable nature of the junkman's demands.

Few Chinese servants ever apply for simple leave of absence. It is usually: "My old mother has an internal pain, and wishes to see me," or "My late paternal grandmother is going to have her coffin transferred from its temporary resting-place to the family tomb." Even Viceroys indulge this strange passion. The Viceroy Liu Kin-t'ang sent up an enormously long memorial when on leave of absence about ten years ago, to justify his remaining in permanent retirement. The Emperor had already granted him several extensions of furlough, but always with the proviso: "So soon as his grandmother is better, he will return from Hu Nan to his post in Kashgaria." At last Liu Kin-t'ang drew such a dreadful picture of the old lady's helplessness, of her love for him in particular, how the servants were unable to fathom her mystic utterances, how he washed her in bed with his own hands, etc., that he gained his point.

The Chinese are greater humbugs in their grief than in any other matter. At funerals the eldest son, at least, ought to "weep at the nose" as well as at the eyes, and usually does so, being often supported, as he staggers along in his grief, by a couple of "best men." The concubines are in chairs, and keep up a prolonged howling so long as any one is in sight, chatting gaily, however, or cracking melon-seeds in the intervals. Often and often, during my prowls in the country, has my attention been directed to a group of mourners by the most heartbreaking sobs. On one occasion I stole up and saw a young, good-looking woman kneeling at her husband's grave, while two children were making mud-pies at her side. She kept shrieking: "Oh! my husband, come back, come back! Oh dear! oh dear! oh dear! I want to die! I am dying with grief!" Every now and then the children would abandon the mud-pies, pull a wry face, and join in for a minute. When the woman caught sight of me, she seized hold of the children with a childish air of delight, and said: "Look! look! there's a foreign devil." Then, evidently reflecting on the impropriety of her conduct, she recommenced wailing most piteously. I hurried away, half fearing that I might be charged with some serious crime, so horrid were her cries. When the Viceroy Jwellin died at Canton, one of the consuls, who was a great friend of his, desired to go to the lying-in-state, and it was a serious question how he and his suite should "howl" when they got there; however, the wailing was compromised for a series of bows. When I arrived at the port the second time, an old Chinaman was announced, and immediately began to wipe his eyes and sob as soon as he saw me. I asked him what was the matter. He said: "I hear one of your predecessors, who was here five years ago, is dead." I said: "Yes! But I can't join you; it is not our custom to cry unless we feel like it." He said: "Oh! I beg your pardon," and at once became as cheerful as possible. It is a punishable offense for an official not to wail in proper form at court. Suksaha, one of the regents during the minority of the Emperor K'ank-hi, was sentenced to death for a number of trumpery "disloyal" acts, one of which was "only weeping a short time, and on horseback instead of on foot," when K'ang-hi's father was buried. The Manchus were originally devoid of all this nonsense, which, however, they have since thought it good policy to borrow from the Chinese.

## Grains of Gold.

Good manners is the art of making those people easy with whom we converse.

Great mischiefs happen more often from folly, meanness and vanity than from the greater sins of avarice and ambition.

The very gnarliest and hardest of hearts has some musical strings in it; but they are tuned differently in every one of us.

There is only one real failure in life possible, and that is not to be true to the best that one knows.

If the cat had wings no birds would be left in the air. If every one had what he wished for who would have anything?

You are not here to vegetate or dream; you were born to act. Every man coming into the world is furnished with a commission of service.

Our natural and happiest life is when we lose ourselves in the exquisite absorption of home, the delicious retirement of independent love.

Nothing keeps us so much in the background as the fear of and the dislike to finding ourselves imperfect; whereas, it is only through conscious imperfection that we can ever advance at all.

## Femininities.

Pimples on the nose are frequently caused by indigestion.

A sewing machine is supposed to do the work of twelve women.

As a rule a man's hair turns gray five years sooner than a woman's.

One-sixth of the Postal Department business in London is conducted by women.

In the announcements of marriages in Spain the ages of the contracting parties are always given.

Miss Yearsey—"Do you think a woman ought to work for a husband?" Miss Quick—"Yes, till she gets him."

Carpets were introduced into England during the reign of Mary, in 1553. They were then considered effeminate.

The 124 largest cities in the country show a steady and almost uniform decrease in the average size of a family.

Paris actresses wear paper lace, which by night looks as beautiful and delicate as the best of real lace, while it costs but a trifle.

There has always been a close friendship between the younger members of the Orleans family and the sons and daughter of the Prince of Wales.

In France a man can put away his wife if she goes on the stage without his consent; in Portugal if she publisnes literary work without his consent.

Intimate Friend—"Has your husband's love grown cold?" Sarcastic Wife—"Oh, no! He loves himself just as much now as he did when we were married twenty years ago."

"Has Miss Gidlingby any accomplishment?" asked the young man. "I should say so!" replied her enthusiastic admirer. "She can refuse to play the piano and stick to it."

The crust of bread was supposed to be richer in nutritive constituents than the crumb, but it has been found that it does not contain any more nitrogenous and mineral matter if brought to the same condition of dryness.

Guest—"Who is this Miss Highmind that all the ladies are so enthusiastic over? I never before knew of a woman whom every other woman spoke well of." Host—"She is a very fine old lady, now in her ninety-ninth year."

Papa—"So Emily stands at the head of her class in French?" Mamma—"Yes. She and another girl were exactly even in the written examinations, but it was decided that Emily shrugged her shoulders more correctly."

Spanish trains so seldom leave stations on time that the time tables in many cases merely indicate the hour of departure—say, 8, and "minutes"—that is, an indefinite number of minutes after 8.

A certain woman recently threatened her drunken husband that she would go with him and get tipsy every time he did. She carried out her threat once, and her husband has not touched a drop since.

Queen Victoria has three rings which she has never taken off—her wedding ring, a little enamel ring with a small diamond centre, which the Prince Consort gave her when she was only 16 years old, and her engagement ring, which takes the form of a serpet of emeralds. The bracelet containing the portrait of the youngest grand or great-grandchild for the time bein is another ornament which her Majesty never removes.

The Egyptian lady uses the man's saddle, but she does not ride with her legs hanging down—this would not suit her ideas of modesty, though her Syrian cousin does not agree with her in this, but rides exactly like a man. Our Egyptian rider shortens her stirrups until the leathers are but a couple of inches long, mounts from a block, sits on the saddle as far forward as she can, throws her feet to the rear, so that they are right under her thighs, and rides solely by balance. She attempts nothing but a balance seat, and her knees "wobble in and out" as she progresses along the street in charge of her black attendant.

When a Burmese husband and wife decide to separate the woman goes out and buys two little candles of equal length, which are made especially for this use. She brings them home. She and her husband sit down on the floor, placing the candles between them, and light them simultaneously. One candle stands for him, the other for her. The one whose candle goes out first rises and goes out of the house forever, with nothing but what he or she may have on. The one whose candle has survived the longest, even by a second, takes everything. So the divorce and division of the property—if you can call that a division—are settled. It looks fair enough, but appearances are deceitful. The wife on her way home with the candle takes a tiny scraping from the bottom of one of them. A very little will be enough. If the husband and house are empty of pretty much everything but children, she takes the shortened candle and walks out free and content. But if the house is well furnished and the husband's possessions are considerable, he gets the short candle and does the walking.

## Masculinities.

The amount of air inspired in twenty-four hours is about 10,000 quarts.

The German Emperor owns 359 carriages for the use of himself and his court.

In the private schools of China a teacher is paid about a cent a day for each pupil.

Ireland has the smallest suicide rate of any country in Europe—only ten in 1,000,000.

Owing to the dry, cold atmosphere, not a single infectious disease is known in Greenland.

In Mexico the school children who have done best are allowed to smoke cigars while pursuing their lessons.

Mabel—"I always refuse a man permission to kiss me." Ada—"Why?" Mabel—"Because then he is more anxious to."

It is unlawful in Turkey to seize a man's residence for debt, and sufficient land to support him is also exempt from seizure.

A farmer near Sacramento says his crop of asparagus this season will bring him $12,000, of which $9000 will be profit. He has twelve acres of it.

A British oculist who has been studying the human eye for thirty years declares that all great men of the past and present have or had blue or gray eyes.

"Fact is," said the one man, "I married because I was lonely, as much as for any other reason. To put it tersely, I married for sympathy." "Well," said the other man, "you have mine."

A Georgia Coroner's jury brought in the following verdict recently: "The deceased came to his death from a railroad in the hands of a receiver, and the same is manslaughter in the first degree."

One of the surgeons of a hospital asked an Irish help which he considered the most dangerous of the many cases then in the hospital. "That, sir," said Patrick, as he pointed to a case of surgical instruments.

Convicts in French prisons are paid for their labor, and earn about 35 cents a day. Half of this they are allowed to spend for extra food, postage, etc., and the other half is saved, to be given to them when discharged.

Pegg—"Sometimes the absolute faith my boy has in my wisdom makes me almost ashamed of myself." Potts—"You need not worry. It will average up all right. By the time he is 20 he will think you know nothing at all."

Cabbage is an old cure for intoxication. The Egyptians ate it boiled before their other food if they intended to drink wine after dinner, and some of the remedies sold as a preventive of intoxication on the Continent are said to contain cabbage seed.

It is said that the amount of sleep one needs depends upon the amount of mental work he does while awake. Men whose brains are never busy can get along with five or six hours' sleep a day, even though their hands be always employed during the waking hours; but the mental worker must have more or go mad.

In some of the schools of Germany the pupils acquire a knowledge of the weeds which injure vegetables. The weeds are pictured on wall maps, in natural colors.

Old Gentleman—"Seriously, I don't remember ever to have told a lie in all my life." Young Gentleman—"So? Well, do you know, I'm getting a little forgetful myself."

The retiring president of the Detroit Board of Education, in his annual report, makes the novel suggestion that courses be established for parents as well as for children in the public schools. His idea is to give some of the advantages of schooling to grown people who have come to America from foreign countries where they have not had the advantage of free tuition.

There is a popular idea that June is the favorite month for weddings, and that the young woman who loves romance, and wishes fortune to smile upon her nuptials in every way, must choose this of all months. Cold and unromantic fact, however, shows that the three most popular marriage months are October, November and December. Fifty years' records prove this to be true, and also demonstrates the fact that the most unpopular months for marriage are January, February and March.

Succi, the fasting expert, whose death was erroneously reported some time ago, has been exhibiting in Verona, where the inhabitants, warned by some of his past achievements in the way of secretly alleviating the pangs of hunger during his fasts, took extraordinary steps to see that the faster really fasted. His exhibition was made in a little house in the public square of the city, built without doors or windows. After a thorough examination by a committee the house was completely walled in with brick and mortar, and Succi was left inside for a week.

A Kansas minister recently closed his Sunday sermon thus: "Brethren, I will now close, for I see that we are going to have a thunder storm. The congregation will please follow me to Brother Soandso's field and help him stack his wheat."

## Latest Fashion Phases.

Biscuit colored linen is one of the most popular fabrics of the season. A pretty model has a skirt wrought around the hem, with tall tapering sprays of white braiding and cording, the material being sufficiently heavy to hang well and show the embroidery.

A short, tight-fitting coat is drawn closely into the waist at the back, and also braided and corded in white. The coat opens slightly in front and has wide revers, one faced with tucked white muslin and narrow valenciennes lace, the other braided and corded with white embroidery. The chemisette is of tucked white muslin, which is set off to advantage by a waistcoat of scarlet cloth, richly embroidered in an Oriental design in gold, silver, blue and yellow. The Russian blouse or moujik is much worn. One built of white cashmere, to be worn with a skirt of the same material, has long bands of cream guipure insertion let in at intervals in the body of the coat, which are lined with green silk. The collar has similar decoration, and in front is a lace jabot over green chiffon. There is a basque of long tabs, all finished with bands of lace insertion. The belt is of green lizard skin, with an old silver buckle in the Persian pattern. Lace insertion is extensively employed in various ways. It appears on skirts as well as on bodices, and on silk and woolen fabrics as well as on thin fabrics. When used on skirts the lace is let into the material in waved lines from hem to waist, or it is used as a heading to flounces. An attractive bodice decoration has the insertion used in lengthwise strips down the centre of the blouse and a scroll pattern on each side of it. Insertions an inch wide are arranged in scrolls and bow knots and applied to muslins; lace braid used in the same manner is very effective. A pretty bodice of pink silk has a yoke striped with lace, and the sleeves are of lace and close-fitting.

It is the rarest thing to achieve anything novel in fabrics with which we have been long familiar. Yet that is what has been accomplished in one design lately seen. The material used is black chiffon, from which it would appear every opportunity in the way of novelty had long since been extracted. The present design, however, is commendably new. The chiffon is mounted upon green silk, bright in tint, and it is untrimmed, save by itself. For the most part the trimming consists of full ruches of the chiffon, and it is used everywhere. Upon the full skirt there are five rows of ruching placed horizontally. The corsage boasts two rows, and from the lower of these hangs a double flounce of the chiffon. The sleeves wrinkle closely from shoulder to wrist, and are beaded by a frill edged with the ruching. Both stock and belt are of the chiffon. The belt is finished in the back with long streamers. Frills, of course, garnish the wrists and throat. With this gown is worn a hat of green straw trimmed with black violets and black lace.

Smaller sleeves are undoubtedly coming into fashion. The latest creations in Paris show scarcely any fullness. At present the most popular sleeve has a small puff at the top, and it is plain from the puff to the wrist. The puffing may be provided by the sleeve itself or by an additional piece of material. A modern model is made perfectly plain, except for a few plaits set in the shoulder seam. Sleeves continue to be cut long, but the point over the hand is not frequently seen. Lace frills over the hand, however, are much in vogue, and they are seen in most of the smartest toilets. Sleeves are also made with puffs and ruffles at the elbow. The autumn coat sleeves will be diminished in width, but a certain breadth will be allowed at the top to accommodate the inside sleeve. Bustles are coming in again—in fact, they are now worn by the most up-to-date women. They are very moderate affairs, and they will prove a boon to many slender women. The newest bustle is constructed in sections—that is, the hip pieces are cut out and padded to fit the figure. They are intended to be worn under the corsets. It is rumored that white stockings will be worn again. Clocks are also in fashion. Designs in stockings are much more elaborate than they used to be. Ribbed effects in black, alternated with colors, combined with embroidery, are deemed very smart. Scotch plaids in lisle and silk mixtures are especially attractive. Plain boot patterns in black, with colored tops, are among the novelties, as are also medallions of lace inserted in the insteps. It is stated that gloves will be worn with embroidered armlets, but they will have but a short life.

Parasols are more elaborate than they have been for many years, and special attention is given to their linings. The linings are often of chiffon, ruched, puffed or kilted and finished at the lower edge with lace frillings and flounces. Even flowers are nestled in the ruches. A novel and charming hat is made of soft rose-colored tulle over a wire frame. The front and top of the hat is entirely covered with a large pink silk poppy. It is finished in the back by a large black velvet bow. Fair dames are already adding bright notes of color to their hats that hint that autumn is not far distant. It is naturally a bit early to mention the season of crimson and russet leaves, but there is a practical view to take of the matter. By this time the summer hat has done good service, and its decorations are doubtless a little faded and worn. Large Leghorn or cream straw hats that have been embellished with tulle and garlands of flowers can now be made to look very smart with a twist of black velvet about the crown, a smart bow at the side and a bunch of black plumes. Nothing looks worse than a mussy summer hat. Yellow straws can be freshened with black or brown velvet and bunches of violets or clusters of red berries and green grasses. Feathers of all kinds will be worn extensively this coming season, which means that large hats will be in vogue.

Another taking style gives some idea of what we may look for as regards combining materials this fall. It represents a gown of dark blue cloth, at least the larger part of the skirt is of that material, the broad band finishing the hem; the bodice and the sleeve is of a small patterned plaid, in colors green and blue, with touches of red and yellow. The most striking thing about the frock as a whole, however, is the vest with its broad rolling collar. These, of green satin, are fairly covered with a heavy ecru guipure. Upon the vest this guipure appears in narrow bands, inserted between several rows of equally narrow tucks. The collar employs a more liberal width. The corsage sags gracefully both back and front, as, indeed, all the coming bodices seem likely to do, and fastens well over at one side. The stock matches the vest. The belt of green satin ribbon has a huge gilt buckle by way of finish. The sleeves are novel. To the elbow they are of the plaid, and consist of a scant puff. From elbow to wrist they are of the green satin well wrinkled. The two parts are separated by short, cuff-like pieces of the satin, covered by the guipure. The hat is of rough blue straw, trimmed with the gayest plaid ribbon and gilt buckles.

Among the elegant gems for dress occasions are those in princess style, open at the back and finished with Marguerite sleeves, and the bodice cut half low to admit of a pretty French chemisette of some rich material. Dainty gowns of white crepe de chine and of chiffon are tucked straight across the bodice, front and back, and at intervals up the entire length of the sleeve, the tucks turning upward. The narrow girdle is trimmed with gold galloon, this garniture also finishing the flaring Medici collar, with plaited chiffon falling from it. The bodice fastens on the left shoulder and under the arm, leaving the tucks unbroken across the front. Many of the new tucked evening gowns of this material have rows of Valenciennes lace insertion on bodice and skirt. Accordion-plaited skirts of black silk grenadine, canvas, tulle, black muslin dotted in silk, and similar diaphanous fabrics are built over foundations of brilliant red and yellow silks and satins. Lace waists made with basque effect, both in black and white, become more popular as the season advances. Entire gowns of white lace are much in vogue. They are built of flounces of lace, sewed on sheer net, the flounces put on to overlap one another, so that only the lace is seen. Both wide and narrow lace is used. The bodices worn with the ruffled skirts are either entirely of lace or of bands of the insertion and net. A new model of crepe de chine, in a figured green and white pattern, has a yoke of lace at the top of the skirt, which fits perfectly over the hips, and there is a yoke on the bodice to match. Corselet lace pieces also adorn many of the new frocks. A black and white mull, worn at a dinner given at one of the country clubs this week had a corselet of black French lace, which held the full blouse in place. The skirt was plain, except for a ruche of black lace at the hem. The sleeves were also of the black lace over white silk.

A recently imported frock is green cashmere velonte has a little blouse, cut in long points, trimmed with a pattern in black lace embroidery. The bodice and sleeves are of plaid silk in blues, greens and white. Another chic French costume is of white Swiss over a silk slip. The body is composed of inch-wide ribbon, with lace. The vest front is trimmed on each side with three full plaitings of the dotted Swiss, very wide at the top and covering the shoulder and most of the sleeve. The plaitings are finished just above the belt with rosettes of lilac velvet with jeweled buttons. The sleeves are made of ribbon and lace insertion, and finished at the wrist with a fall of lace. The belt and collar are of violet velvet. The skirt is built with a deep Spanish flounce of Swiss, with ribbon insertions, and a full ruching at the top of the flounce. A charming frock of blue muslin has a fichu of white muslin, edged with ruffles of the blue and with cream lace. The skirt is trimmed with seven alternate ruffles of the blue and white. Batiste laces wrought in a delicate net ground are much used to trim ecru lawn and linen batistes. Short boleros and Eton jackets made of cut-work and embroidery, lined with colored silk, are considered very smart with light summer gowns.

## Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

A pretty rose sachet seen the other day was of the finest flowered chiffon, with drawing string and bows of delicate green taffeta ribbons. The filling was of rose leaves, pink, yellow and deep red, and had come all the way across the continent from Tacoma. Another rose bag was of white chiffon embroidered in colored butterflies, with triple accordion-plaited frills to set off the sides and bottom. The roses were of all colors and represented the flowers used by the owner during her first season, at the various cotillions, teas and receptions she had attended. These sachets were suspended by long ribbon strings to the backs of artistic chairs. When the room is heated they emit a delicate perfume.

Yet another use is to be made of rose petals, which may not sound so artistic, perhaps, but to the woman who is fond of daintily perfumed clothing it is equally as acceptable. Petals are sewn in thin muslin bags and placed in bureau and chiffonier drawers among the clothing. One young woman boasts that she has a rose bag for each sleeve of every one of her bodices, besides a goodly supply for her bureau drawers. They are made from flowers presented by her numerous men friends and "keep her things" fresher and sweeter than any sachet she could purchase.

The French woman's idea of dress is, of courre, perfect in all its details, but if she must practice economy she never neglects her shoes and her gloves. "Bien chause et bien ganlee" is her motto, and she lives up to this. Her gloves are proverbial. She chooses them with art, she puts them on with art, she carries them with art, and, finally, she mends them with art.

She always puts on her gloves in the house, and buttons them as carefully as any other article of dress. She never would be guilty of pulling on her gloves rudely in the street or in a street car or of squeezing her hands into gloves several sizes too small and buttoning them with a hairpin. This would be considered a great impropriety. Many people cram their hands into gloves which are so small that the glove looks stuffed, and a yellow kid on a pudgy hand reminds one of nothing more poetic than a ham in its yellow bag. People, especially ladies with large hands, ought to buy gloves which are larger than seems necessary; for tight gloves, like tight shoes, always make the hand swell and increase in size by years of such injudicious treatment.

Tight gloves are always responsible for redness of the hands and for wrinkles. Women who care to preserve the whiteness and beauty of their hands and arms always wear loose gloves. Ellen Terry, for example, who has a large hand, so large that it is somewhat masculine, never compresses it in tight gloves, but selects a comfortable size which gives her hand ease and full play.

Now, after selecting gloves—nice stout, loose ones for street wear, and others a little closer in fit for calling and for evening wear—there is a way to put them on. If there is anything that mars a woman's appearance it is a glove with the seams twisted and all the fingers awry.

The first trying on of a glove is the most important, because this gives the glove its set. First shake some powder into each finger of the glove. Then place your elbow firmly on a table with the hand upright and the thumb extended toward the palm. Draw the body of the glove over the fingers, and, after seeing that each seam of the glove is straight with the line of the finger, coax each finger into the finger of the glove. Be sure, in the meantime, that the stitching on the back of the glove is also straight. Now insert the thumb, and look once again to see if the seams are all straight. If not pull the glove off and begin again. The seam at the tip of the thumb should be in line with the middle of the thumb nail. Smooth the wrist neatly and fasten the second button first. All of this may seem tiresome, but an expensive anad well-fitting glove is worth the trouble of putting it on carefully, for it will wear twice as long. In removing a glove, skin it off quickly, turn the fingers, put a little powder in them, smooth them neatly and place them in a glove case.

Corned Beef Patties.—Chop fine remnants of cold corned beef; add a slice or two of dried bread; then pepper and sage and a well-beaten egg; stir all together, mould into cakes with flour enough to hold, and fry a nice brown.

Jellied Chicken.—Boil until tender, in enough water to cover, one chicken. Remove when done, and let water boil down to one quart. Cut the meat into small pieces. To the water add three-quarters of a box of gelatine soaked, one tablespoonful of Worcestershire sauce, and salt and pepper to taste. Slice one hard-boiled egg, add to the chicken, pour over it the strained liquor. Mix well, and put into square mould. Set in a cool place to harden.

To Stew Prunes.—If the prunes are old or dry, they may be washed and soaked for an hour; if they are fresh French plums, they don't require either; take half a pound of prunes and put them in a jelly can, with two tablespoonfuls of water and two teaspoonfuls of sugar, a small bit of lemon rind, and a teaspoonful of lemon juice; cover the jar with paper, and put it into a saucepan, with a little water; let it boil at the side of the fire for one hour, or perhaps more if the prunes are very hard; take them out on a dish, pour the liquid round, and pick out the lemon rind; they will be found delicious, and are very wholesome and healing, it is said; they are healing to the temper and disposition, as well as to the body.

Stewed Mushrooms.—Skin the mushrooms neatly, and wash them; put them into a small stewpan with a dessertspoonful of butter, pepper, and salt, a few drops of vinegar, and two tablespoonfuls of water; let them stew with the lid on for twenty minutes or half an hour, according to size and thickness; then add either half a teacupful of cream or one teaspoonful of cornflour, mixed with about half a teacupful of water; let it cook for a few minutes; this is for six or eight big ones; large mushrooms may be baked in the oven with a few bits of butter over them for about twenty minutes.

Mutton Pies.—Half a pound of flour, one and a half ounces of lard, three-quarters of a gill of water, salt, pepper, three-quarters of a pound of mutton; put the flour in a basin and add a pinch of salt; boil the lard and water, and pour in among the flour; mix and make into a dough, working well; take a piece of this dough and flatten it; have a block the size of the pie, and of the kind used for shaping them; work the paste on it about an inch up the side of the block; take it off and leave to get hard, then cut out lids to fit the pies; cut the mutton in little bits, season, and put a tablespoonful of water in it, mix all; fill the cases, wet the edges, put on the lids, brush with milk, and bake half an hour.

Custard Sauce.—Mix in a saucepan one teaspoonful of cornflour, one tablespoonful of sugar, and a little flavor, and add one breakfast-cupful of milk; stir till it boils, then add the yolks of two eggs off the fire, stir in and bring to boiling point, and pour round the pudding.

## CURING THE TOPER.

Much as we are told from time to time of the frightful effects of a too liberal consumption of alcohol, it is doubtful if one person in a thousand has any idea of the life led by a chronic drunkard.

I paid a visit the other day, says a correspondent, to a well-known home for inebriates, where I was privileged to have an interview with the resident physician.

"I suppose you have some awful drunkards here?" I remarked as we strolled round the garden, where a number of young fellows who have been victims to drink were having a game of tennis. "I thought it was a dangerous thing to stop all drink in the case of a man who has been imbibing like a fish all his life."

"We do have some terrible cases," the doctor answered. "I know some men who have drunk their two bottles of brandy a day off and on for fifteen years; nevertheless, when they come here they have to discontinue the drink right away. But you must understand that in the case of a man who is in a thoroughly soaked condition it is not advisable to keep him entirely away from stimulants unless you put him under proper medical control. The cardinal rule here is absolute restraint from drink. It is essential, if you want to cure a drunkard, to keep him away from alcohol for a lengthened period. Before you can do any good to him you must conform to this principle. It is only rational. A drunkard is a poisoned individual, and you must take away his poison.

"As for the craving, the body has grown so accustomed to a regular supply of alcohol that when it is withdrawn the want of its effect on the nervous system is very great; but with care and proper treatment with drugs you can mitigate the trouble very considerably. I may inform you that, so far as the liquor itself is concerned, the majority of drunkards hate it. It is the stimulation they want.

"People talk of the vice of drunkenness, but after a certain point it is no question of sin, but just a physical ailment. In my opinion, it is simply cruel to indiscriminately stigmatize drunkenness as a sin. The only time in a drunkard's career, when heredity does not exist, that drunkenness can in any way be classed as a sin is in the immediate commencement by systematic excess; subsequently, when that excess has lasted sufficiently long to render the subject incapable of restraining himself, that incapacity is proof that the individual is in a diseased condition and irresponsible for any actions he may do to acquire liquor.

"For ourselves, we look upon the inebriates as being just as much the subject of mania as many other victims of other forms of monomania."

"You ought to be able to explain the mystery as to how a man becomes a chronic tippler."

"All drinking starts in probably one of two ways; it is either due to strong hereditary tendency or to insanity. I have known the father, mother, sister, and uncle of a patient to be drinkers. In twenty-nine cases which I investigated there was a history of insanity, while in no fewer than 211 a distinct history of inebriety was obtainable. Seventy-six cases showed that one or other of the parents was a drunkard, and 46 that the grandparents were similarly inclined. Taking insanity and inebriety together, there was an hereditary predisposing history in at least 240 cases out of a total of 442.'

With respect to these, either the father or the mother was inclined to excess in 76 cases. One hundred and fifty-two of the patients had accustomed themselves to drink all kinds of spirits, 118 confined themselves to whiskey, 29 to brandy, while the remainder had no specially favorite potion, but were partial to all.

"Many cases start originally from environments," said the doctor after I had taken note of these figures. "Free-and-easy life in the city, too lively college life, army life are some instances. Young men don't discriminate between moderate drinking and excess. Excess in a young, immature brain is more important and more dangerous in its results than excess in an older individual whose brain has undergone complete development, and who has started drinking in later life. Some of my most hopeless cases have been the young ones—young fellows of nineteen and twenty who have been in the habit of drinking their bottle of spirits a day—so that the ordinary idea that a young drunkard has youth in his favor is quite erroneous."

"How do you manage to prevent your patients from getting liquor on the sly?"

"Well, we don't allow them to keep any money, and they have no liberty at all for the first three months, during which time they remain inside the grounds. I prepare them gradually to go out by themselves. It is far better to place a little trust in a man, if it can be done judiciously, than to send him out with a keeper. We have had just a few cases of alcohol smuggling."

"What do the patients say as regards their treatment?"

"Those who do well as a rule say that it doesn't involve much hardship, but as regards the others, I place no confidence in what they allege. Many break out immediately on discharge. On the other hand, some heavy drinkers keep up for two or three years and then, on breaking out, come back to us for a week, when we patch them up."

"What about those wonderful cures we hear so much of?"

"Specifics are of no value whatever except as tonics. Apples are said to be a cure for drunkenness, but they are nothing of the kind."

## CRIMINAL SOCIETIES.

Almost every city of any size and importance in that part of the world which is termed civilized has a thieves' club or a criminal society of some sort, the object of which is the aiding and abetting of crimes of more or less serious character. Of clubs of this character, a well-known Parisian one, may be taken as an example.

This club is situated in a low quarter of the city, and, although well known to the police, has existed some ten or twelve years. Its club-house is a common tavern, all profits accruing from which go to the club fund for assisting members who have the misfortune to get into difficulties with the police—an incident of frequent occurrence. This club is always open, morning, noon and night, to its members, who alone are allowed to enter; and meetings of a committee of twelve of the most prominent, which is tantamount to saying most criminal, members are held once every fortnight to consider all applications for entrance, and discuss what steps should be taken in order to help any of the club's members who may at the time be in trouble with the police.

The club's defense fund almost invariably briefs counsel in such cases, and is always available for members who have matured good schemes of robbery, but lack the finances necessary to carry them through satisfactorily; but a certain percentage of the proceeds of such robberies have to be paid into the fund to replace the disbursement.

The head of one of the departments of criminal investigation in Paris has asserted that two or three years ago the club paid the entire expenses of a gang of expert burglars who visited London, among other important cities, and made some cleverly devised hauls.

The membership of the club fluctuates considerably from time to time, but the average might be taken as being between a hundred and fifty and two hundred, all of whom are experienced thieves, no one being admitted to the club until a certain number of successful crimes have been recorded to his name. Any member seeking honest labor is immediately expelled.

Constantinople being the hotbed of discontent and corruption, one is not surprised to find it possesses a club for assassination and revolution. The Sublime Porte has made many and vigorous attempts to stamp it out of existence, but all the endeavors have been in vain. It is like a water-bed, when pressed down in one place it rises in another. Its members are mostly men belonging to that party known as "Young Turks;" many of them of considerable wealth, and all of very extreme political views.

St. Petersburg is so generally looked upon as the home of secret societies that it would be supererogatory to say much about it or them. It might, however, be mentioned that there are more than nine clubs in the City of Ominous Secrets which aim at the lives of the Czar and his Ministers. But they are rendered almost impotent by their existence and object being well known to the police spies, many of whom are members of these clubs, and so keep in touch with all plots by attending the periodical meetings—a dangerous occupation, for which they are highly paid.

Barcelona was until recently the home of one of the most dangerous societies of fanatical Anarchists that has ever disturbed the peace of the world. The now historic outrage at the Barcelona Theatre was the opening of a long campaign, intended to shake every country in Europe, which was formulated by this society in a small printing office in a by-street of the city. It had connection with every Continental capital; but now that Anarchism has partially blown itself to bits, and no one does more than preach it, the society has practically ceased to exist, and its meeting halls are the abodes of peaceful men and women.

Recent affairs in Cuba have resulted—the only result, apparently—in the organization of an assassination club in Havana for the express purpose of ridding Cuba of the hated Spaniards. Many arrests of its members have been made, but to very little purpose. While Marshal Campos was at the head of the Spanish army in that country the destruction of his life was the chief aim of the club, and carefully laid plots against him and other leaders of the Government forces were discovered. He has gone, and General Weyler is there, but the latter is regarded as beneath the consideration of the society. Consequently its members have turned their attention to other personages. The assassination of a score of prominent Spaniards has been written down in the club's history, and many more will, it is said, be added unless some sweeping reforms are introduced to mitigate the discontent of the Cubans.

Colors.—Every quarter of the globe is ransacked for the materials—animals, vegetables and minerals—employed in the manufacture of the colors one finds in a paint box. From the cochineal insect are obtained the gorgeous carmines, the crimson, scarlet, and purple lakes. Sepia is the inky fluid discharged by the cuttle-fish to render the water opaque for its own concealment when attacked. Ivory black and bone black are made out of ivory chips. The exquisite Prussian blue is got by fusing horses' hoofs and other refuse animal matter with impure potassium carbonate. In the vegetable kingdom are included the lakes derived from roots, barks, and gums. From the madder plant, which grows in Hindustan, is manufactured Turkey red. Gamboge comes from the yellow sap of a tree which the natives of Siam catch in cocoanut shells. Raw sienna is the natural earth from the neighborhood of Sienna, Italy. When burned, it is burnt sienna. Raw umber is an earth from Umbria, and is also burned. To these vegetable pigments may be added Indian ink, which is said to be made from burnt camphor. The Chinese, who alone can produce it, will not reveal the secret of its composition. Of real ultra-marine but little is found in the market. It is obtained from the precious lapis lazuli, and commands a fabulous price.

Patience.—We may be endowed with courage and energy—the spirit to dare and the power to do—and, thrusting aside all obstacles, by persistent force accomplish some of those aims which afar off appear so easy of performance. But to attain completeness, one more quality must be added—sweet, silent patience. How did the great pines reach their undecaying grandeur, each once but a little sapling? or the monarch oak spring from the imbedded acorn? 'Twas by the long years of patience, with which Nature in those solitudes watched over her forest children. Even the green ivy, with less tardy growth, silently, and slowly, and patiently creepeth on, mantling the gray battlements. How but by deep study, and quiet solitary thought, have the great teachers of science acquired their knowledge? Whether 'twere the marvels of earth and sea, or those more wondrous truths of the infinite worlds above. We glance at the pictured realization of an artist's dream, or statue hewn from the rude block of marble, or listen to some grand symphony, rarely remembering their long patient cost of years—the better portion of a lifetime. Some deem this a simple virtue; rather should it be considered a sublime one, not only for the grand and lofty aims it inculcates, but for the many daily needs of home-life—lightening our heavy burdens, whispering sweet, hopeful promises and shedding the glory of its gentle radiance over what otherwise might be a darkened lot.

## KEEPING UP WITH THE TIMES.

Few people study the present time—the moment—so as to fathom its power and its weakness, its needs and its redundancies, its possibilities and its inevitable limits. Thus many who prepare elaborately for their life-work find themselves foiled by their want of adaptation to the present moment. Some have clung to old methods that have been superseded, or to old ideas that have been outgrown, and they find, to their dismay, that, however fitted they may be for bygone times, they are out of harmony with the present moment. Not only in art and literature, but in each department of human industry, it is essential to keep up with the times, to know what has been done and what is doing in that special sphere, and, without discarding what has stood the test of time, to welcome and adopt all the real advancements that modern progress makes. Only thus can the man and the moment so harmonize as to win the desired success.

## SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

Transfer Newspaper Pictures.—The liquid to be used is made by dissolving 1½ drachms common yellow soap in 1 pint of hot water, adding, when nearly cold, 3¼ fluid ounces spirit turpentine, and shaking thoroughly together. This fluid is applied liberally to the surface of the printed matter with a soft brush or sponge (being careful not to smear the ink, which soon becomes softened) and allowed to soak for a few minutes; then well damp the plain paper on which the transfer is to be made, place it upon the engraving and subject the whole to moderate pressure for about one minute. On separating them a reversed transfer will be found on the paper.

Not long ago, a Buda-Pesth manufacturer made the unpleasant discovery that his cash box was plundered day after day. Failing in his attempt to catch the thief, he applied to a professor of chemistry, who gave him a powder, which he sprinkled over his cash every night before leaving the office. This powder has the peculiar effect of dyeing the skin blue, the color being intensified by washing, while it resists the application of soap. On the very first day the manufacturer noticed a deficiency of eight crowns in the silver cash box. He at once called his employes together and ordered them one by one to steep their hands into a basin full of water, got ready for the purpose. One of the men was very loth to follow the example of his comrades. At last he consented, when, no sooner had he dipped his hands in the bowl, than they turned dark blue! His employer at once accused him of the crime, and he admitted his guilt.

The slave trade in Morocco thrives as much as ever. The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society has received information that a native, who is well known in the trade, has lately brought to Tangier 24 young girls, whom he has sold privately in that town at prices averaging from 40 to over 100 dollars. Although the open sale of slaves in the streets of Tangier and other coast towns has been forbidden, owing to the strong representations made by the society, it has hitherto been found impossible to interfere with private sales of human beings.

Professor Krafft-Ebing, who holds the chair of mental diseases at the University of Vienna, enlivened his instruction recently by allowing one of his patients to lecture in his stead. The man is afflicted by periodic attacks of mania, during which he is much more clever and witty than when sane. His lecture on "The Mental Condition of the Maniac in Periodic Attacks of Madness" was a brilliant success. After it was over he was shut up again.

—Bees, according to a statistician, must, in order to collect a pound of honey deprive 62,000 clover blossoms of their nectar. To do this the 62,000 flowers must be visited by an aggregate of 3,750,000 bees; or, in other words, to collect his pound of honey one bee must make 3,750,000 trips from and to the hive. As bees are known to fly for miles in quest of suitable fields of operation, it is clear that a single ounce of honey represents millions of miles of travel.

—Henceforth the names of monarchs in Prussia may not be used without permission as signs for cafes and restaurants in that country. This is the text of a recent Cabinet decree, which, although it has been in force only a few days, has already been applied in Berlin. A public house which had "Kaiser Friedrich" for its sign has been obliged to change its name.

## Humorous.

GRAVITATION.
A pair in a hammock
Attempted to kiss,
And less than a jiffy
They landed like this

Companions in Arms—Twins

Out on bale—In a leaky boat.

Big Winner—The man who wins the day.

Universal Step-father—The dancing-master.

Jim Carder: "Is there anything except luck in playing cards?"

Jack Spot: "A good deal."

Ethel: "Have you any very expensive tastes, Charlie?"

Charlie: "Well, I don't know. I'm very fond of you."

"Did you tender your resignation?" said a man to an ex-officeholder.

"I resigned by request, sir; but there was nothing tender about it. It was tough, sir."

He: "And what would you do if I kissed you?"

She (with dignity): "I'd call mamma." (After a pause) "But mamma's out this evening."

Timms: "I don't know about that. I have an idea that most of the women who go around howling for their rights are the very ones who haven't caught the knack of hossing their husbands."

Charlie Sniffens (out with Dollie Dimple): "Pardon me for bowing to that shabby old codger, but I feel obliged to do it."

Dollie: "Who is he, Charlie?"

Charlie: "He is the head of our firm."

A Cruel Nurse.—Mr. De Fashion: "Why did you discharge that nurse girl?"

Mrs. De Fashion: "She kicked poor little Fido, just for biting the baby."

Simms: "I'd hate to be the husband of one of these woman's rights women."

Teacher: "When water becomes ice, what is the great change that takes place?"

Pupil: "A change in price."

A paper publishes the following significant advertisement from a disconsolate wife: "Adolphus. Return to your Matilda. The piano has been sold."

"Papa," said the young woman, "surely you ought to know better than to use the small 'i' in your letters when speaking in the first person singular. You should use the capital."

"Not much I won't," said the plutocratic parent. "The small letter uses up less ink."

When are friends like the blending of colors?—When they correspond.

A: "Why are girls called 'misses'?"

X: "Did you ever see 'em try to hit anything?"

Charlie: "Mamma, mayn't I go out into the street for a bit? The boys say there is a comet to be seen."

Mamma: "Well, yes, but don't go too near."

Mrs. De Bride was entertaining callers. After they had left she remarked to her husband, "I hope they didn't see my walking shoes lying there; they would think me very untidy if they did."

"Oh, if they saw them, they probably thought they were mine," answered her husband, in a consoling tone. And she hasn't spoken to him since.

Ethel: "Oh, Tom, what a pity it is that you are not rich! They say that some of those millionaires don't dare to leave the house for days at a time, because they receive threatening letters saying that something dreadful will happen to them if they don't pay the writer sums of money."

Tom Hardup: "Pooh! Why, I get plenty of just such letters."

The physician was surprised to find the head of the household at the door with a shotgun. "Why, what's the matter?" stammered the doctor.

"That there medicine you gave my wife she says is makin' her feel like a new woman. And I want you to understand that no new woman business goes in this house. First thing I know, she'll be out makin' speeches."

Lady of the house: "I don't need any of your bufglar alarms."

Agent: "That's just what the lady next door said."

Lady of the house (on the alert): "Said what?"

Agent: "That it was no use of me calling here, as you wouldn't need any, because you had nothing to steal."

Lady of the house (gritting her teeth): "Give me three!"

### ALL WERE THERE.

A correspondent tells this story of a German publisher in St. Louis: "There had been a big fire directly opposite the office of his paper the night before. A magnificent building was destroyed, with all its contents. The streets in the vicinity were filled with people, who so choked the thoroughfares as to prevent the firemen from working. It was the event of the season, in a news sense, and the papers were naturally filled with articles telling the whole story. The publisher of the paper in question on reaching his office next morning looked over the papers of his contemporaries first, and then, lighting a fresh cigar, tilted back his chair and took up his own paper to read what he felt sure would be the best report of all. To his amazement there was not a line concerning the fire in his paper. When he sufficiently realized the fact that no mention had been made of the conflagration he dashed up stairs to his city editor, and, bursting into the room, exclaimed: 'Why didn't we have a story of the fire?' The city editor, who was a German, without a great deal of experience in the country, looked up calmly and replied: 'Vat vas de uze of brintin' anyding about it? Everybody in town vas dere to see de whole ting for hiself.'"

### AMATEUR ACTING.

The anecdotes told at the expense of amateur actors are innumerable, and, of course, of varying degrees both of truthfulness and of drollery. Not long since another was added to the list by some amateurs who ambitiously undertook to play "Hamlet" for the benefit of a charity. The man who was to act the part of Horatio was extremely timid, and, when the night of the performance came, he was so overcome by stage fright that he could hardly remember the lines he had so carefully studied. During the scene where Horatio and Marcellus tell Hamlet of the appearance of the spirit of his father, and the prince asks: "Stayed it long?" "While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred," Horatio managed to say, but so confusedly that Marcellus forgot his cue, and, instead of rejoining "Longer, longer," stood staring at Horatio. The prompter, with a view to helping out Marcellus, began to whisper from the wings: "Longer, longer!" Unfortunately Horatio, having lost all control of himself, was inspired with the idea that Marcellus was looking at him because he had made an error and that he words from the wing were addressed to him. With a great effort he straightened himself up, cleared his throat, and said loudly: "While one with moderate haste might tell two hundred, then!"

Are You Wearied?—"It is astonishing how few people know the true method of rest," says a doctor. "In many cases when the brain and body urgently demand physical rest, their owners seek to stimulate them by alcoholic means—and then the physician or coroner officially attributes the untimely demise to heart failure, or paralysis, or apoplexy, or alcohol, or some disease due to the failure of a particular organ to do its whole duty. The fact is that these are nothing more than different names for one thing—exhaustion from lack of rest.

"But many who are willing to take physical rest do not know how to set about it.

"It is simple enough: lying flat down and stretching out at full length is the most restful position the human body can take, because it requires no effort whatever to maintain this pose. And when once people in general grasp this fact and act in accordance with it, the diminution of disease will be something extraordinary."

Courtship Among the Choctaws.—There are two thousand of the Choctaws living in their ancestral homes in Mississippi, and they are said to retain in all their pristine vigor most of the usages of their ancestors. Among these the methods employed in conducting a courtship and performing a marriage are curious. When a young Choctaw sees a maiden who pleases his fancy he watches his opportunity until he finds her alone. He then advances within a short distance and gently lets fall a pebble at her feet; he may have to do this two or three times before he attacts the maiden's attention, when, if this pebble-throwing is agreeable, she soon makes it manifest; if otherwise a scornful look and a decided "ekwah" indicate that his suit is in vain. Sometimes, instead of throwing pebbles, the suitor enters the maiden's cabin and lays his hat upon the bed. If the man's suit be acceptable the hat is permitted to remain, but if she be unwilling to be his bride, it is instantly removed. Whichever method be employed, the rejected suitor knows that it is useless to press his suit, and beats as graceful a retreat as possible. When a marriage is agreed upon, the time and place are fixed for the ceremony. The relatives and friends of the bride and bridegroom meet at their respective homes, and from thence march to the marriage ground, halting at a short distance from one another. The brothers of the bride go across to the opposite party, and bring forward the bridegroom, who is then seated upon a blanket spread upon the ground. The sisters of the bidegroom then do likewise by going over and bringing forward the bride. She is expected to break loose and run, but, of course, is pursued, captured, and brought back to be seated by the side of the bridegroom. All the parties now cluster around the couple, the woman's relatives bring forward a bag of bread, a lingering symbol of the time when the woman had to raise the corn, the man's relatives a bag of meat, in memory of the days when the man should have provided the household with game. Next presents of various sorts are showered on the couple, who all this time sit still, not even speaking a word. When the last present has been given they arise, now man and wife, and, just as in civilized life, provisions are spread and the ceremony is rounded off with a feast.

Domestic Life.—Housekeeping has its trials, no doubt; but systematic work, and a determination not to fret over little things, will go far towards lightening them. Every woman should make it the aim and purpose of her life to attain perfection in her home. A day for mending, a day for washing, another for ironing, for sewing, and so on, and at once the work becomes simplified and less of a hardship. "Oh, dear me, to-morrow is washing day! How I hate it!" This is a common saying, and there is nothing very wrong about it, for no one will assert that washing is an agreeable pastime. Yet it must be done, so it is worse than useless to fret over it; as a consequence every sensible woman should determine to look on the bright side of the wash-tub and soap-suds. Make a few good rules and keep them. Determine not to put the whole house in disorder and to make everyone else miserable, because the clothes must be washed, the bread baked, etc. Suppose dinner is to be served at a certain hour, and dear husband forgets all about it and arrives in the best of humor when everything is cold. Don't cry and scold, but make the best of it. He will enjoy his cold meat if hot words are not served with it. We all know women who are constantly finding fault with something or other, and who are never happy unless there is something to scold about. But every such little worry, every harsh word, every disagreeable look, makes life harder, and but deepens the lines of trouble about the eyes and mouth. There are plenty of real troubles to be met with, without allowing household cares to become a source of torment.

Names.—It is curious to observe how comparatively few Christian names are in use at the present time, and a statistician has discovered that fourteen out of every hundred girls are called Mary, and thirteen out of every hundred boys are called William. This fact is not due, as might naturally be supposed, to the Revolution, which placed the daughter and son-in-law of James II. upon the English throne. The number of Marys is due to the popularity of a saint of that name in the Middle Ages, whilst William is popular solely because it was the name of William the Conqueror. The constant use, however, of both these names, their origin apart, is the strong family feeling that names daughters after mothers and sons after fathers. Another interesting point, proved by the same statistician, is that more than half the children baptised are given two names, considerably less than half one name, whilst the remaining number have a varied number, some even as many as twenty-four. And not only is William popular as a Christian name, but it is the root of more surnames than any other word in the language. Williams itself is the commonest surname we have, with the exception of Smith and Jones, being much commoner than either Brown or Robinson. In addition to Williams, Williamson, and other names directly derived, there are, from the French, Guillemot, Gillet, and Gillot. Then the "Bill," into which William is so frequently turned, gives us Billson; whilst Willcox, Willy, Wilkins, and Wilkinson may all be traced to a Norman source. Of course fashion influences the choice of names, as it does the choice of clothes, and frequently after the appearance of a successful book, or the death of some eminent person, there are a large number of children baptised with the name of the heroine or hero. Speaking of girls' names a few years ago, Ethel, Mabel, and Maud were extremely fashionable; today, Dorothy and Doris seem to be the most popular.

### PLEASURE.

Not only may pleasure be rightly welcomed into spheres where it has heretofore been ignored—it may be heightened and strengthened in every sphere of life. By wise cultivation it can be made firm and reproductive, instead of being worn out by excess, as is frequently the case. Pleasure has been defined as "the complete and appropriate satisfaction of each of our faculties or appetites." What has been quite overlooked in the general desire and quest for it is that any one propensity, indulged at the expense of the rest, will give less and less pleasure, until at length the source becomes dried up. Not abstinence, but moderation, is what is needed to keep the springs of pleasure fresh, pure, and abundant; and this moderation is only gained by devoting a due attention to all the faculties.

### AN IDEAL WIFE.

Charles Dickens thus described an ideal wife: "She is a true and noble wife for whose ambition a husband's love and her children's adoration are sufficient, who applies her military instincts to the discipline of her household, and whose legislative instincts exercise themselves in making the laws for her nurse, whose intellect has field enough for her in communion with her husband, and whose heart asks for no other honors than his love and admiration—a woman who does not think it a weakness to attend to her toilet, and who does not disdain to be beautiful, who believes in the virtue of glossy hair and well-fitting gowns, and who eschews rents and reveled edges, slipshod shoes and audacious make-ups—a woman who speaks low and does not speak much; who is patient and gentle, and intellectual and industrious; who loves more than she reasons, and yet does not love blindly; who never scolds and never argues, but adjusts with a smile—such a woman is the wife we have all dreamed of once in our lives, and is the mother we will worship in the backward distance of the past."


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